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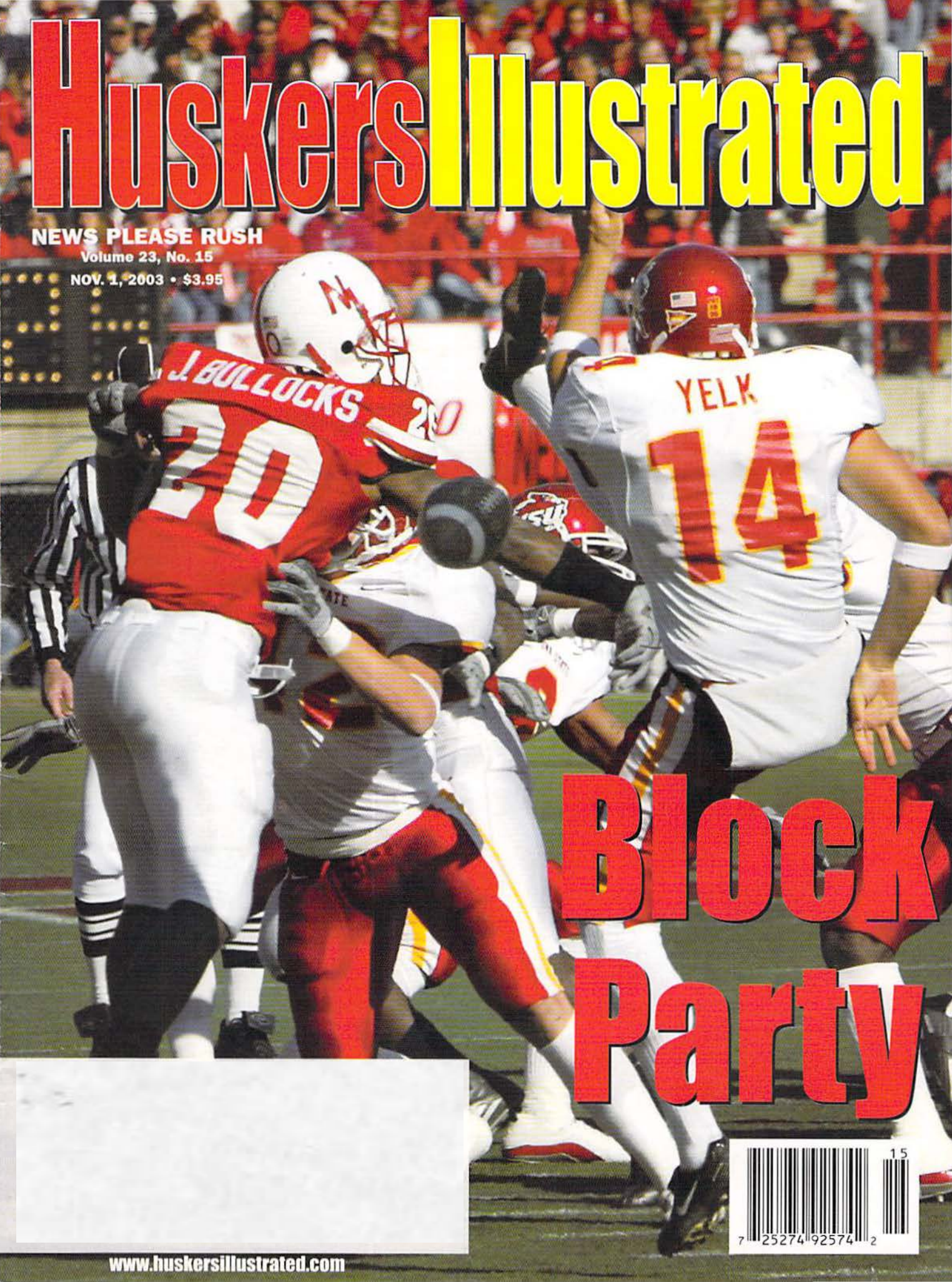

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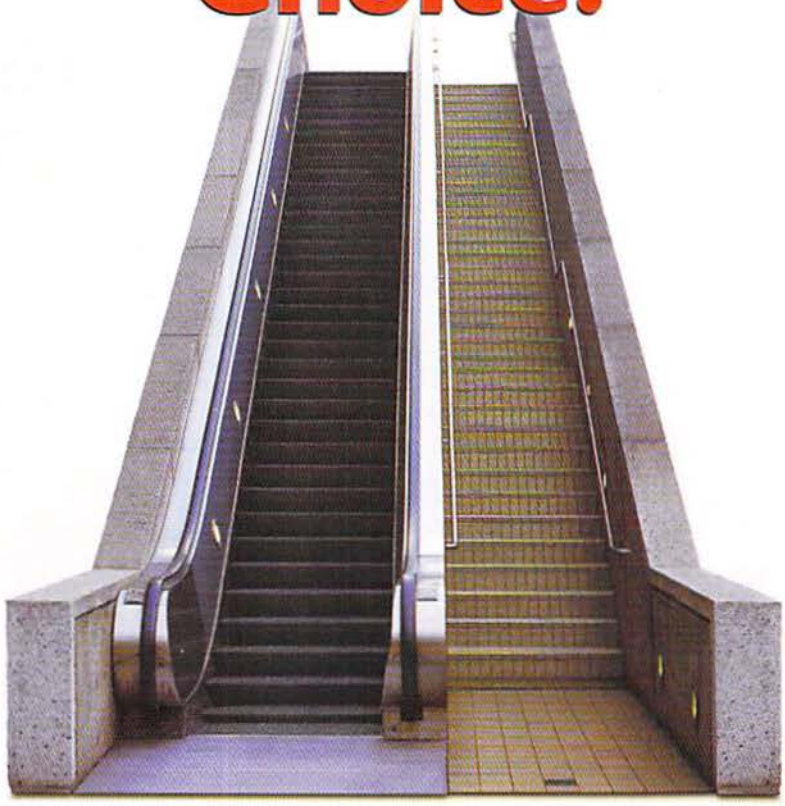

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Source: President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports Research Digest, "Cost and Consequences of Sedentary Living: New Battleground for an Old Enemy," March 2002.

FROM THE EDITOR

Eyes On Texas

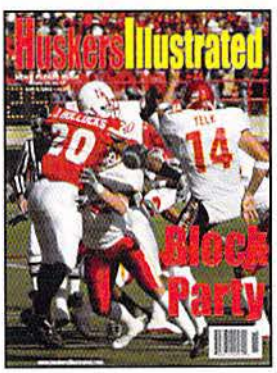
Challenging November starts with trip to Longhorn country

Brian HILL

ALTHOUGH they insisted otherwise, it had to be nearly impossible for the Huskers not to be peeking ahead a week.

The matchup with Texas looms large and provides a huge roadblock to start a challenging November. The Longhorns are loaded with talent, but certainly beatable. Arkansas went into Austin and came away with a 38-28 victory, and No. 1 Oklahoma manhandled Texas on a neutral field.

Last year in Lincoln, Jammal Lord had a huge game in the near miss. Lord rushed for a school quarterback record of 234 yards and completed 7-of-14 passes for 98 yards and two touchdowns.



Nebraska's defense is vastly improved from the one that allowed Chris Simms to pass for a school record 419 yards in the Longhorns' 27-24 win. This time, Texas has a two-headed monster at quarterback in junior Chance Mock and redshirt freshman Vince Young. Mock has passed for 1,142 yards and 14 touchdowns, while the versatile Young has thrown for 567 yards and two TDs and rushed for 550 more and eight scores.

But the biggest thing might be overcoming the aura of more than 80,000 fans at Texas Memorial Stadium. In 1999, Nebraska went in rated No. 3 and fell 24-20 to No. 18 Texas. It's a tough place to play.

"The biggest thing is that we have to match their energy level," defensive end Trevor Johnson said. "It's hard to play on the road against the crowd and the team. We've got to keep it up the whole game."

Nebraska didn't exactly keep it up against Iowa State, but a 28-0 lead midway through the second quarter was more than enough to secure the victory that matched last year's win total. The Huskers, 7-1, recorded their second shutout and got some rest for a number of front-line players, including Lord, and the chance to see a number of reserves in action.

You can read more about Nebraska's victory, including the latest big plays by free safety Josh Bullocks, in this edition of Huskers Illustrated. Already tied for the season interception record, Bullocks blocked one punt himself and returned another blocked by Demorrio Williams 26 yards for a touchdown.

This week's feature story is a look at backup guard Greg Austin and how rare it is for a true freshman to contribute on the offensive line. The subject of our player profile is senior linebacker Curt Tomasevicz, who enjoys his role on the kickoff team. This installment of "Where Are They Now" features Bill Lewis, one in a long line of standout centers.

As usual, there's much, much more, including a closer look at the Texas game, a day after Halloween, that starts the defining stretch drive for the 2003 Huskers. With a one-game lead in the Big 12 North, a loss wouldn't be the end of the world, but a win would be huge.

Entering the season, eight or nine wins looked like a great accomplishment, but with seven in the bank through the end of October, the bar has been raised.

We'll see how high it goes. ■

ON THE COVER

Nebraska sophomore free safety Josh Bullocks blocks a punt by Iowa State's Tony Yelk in the first quarter. *Photo by Scott Bruhn.*

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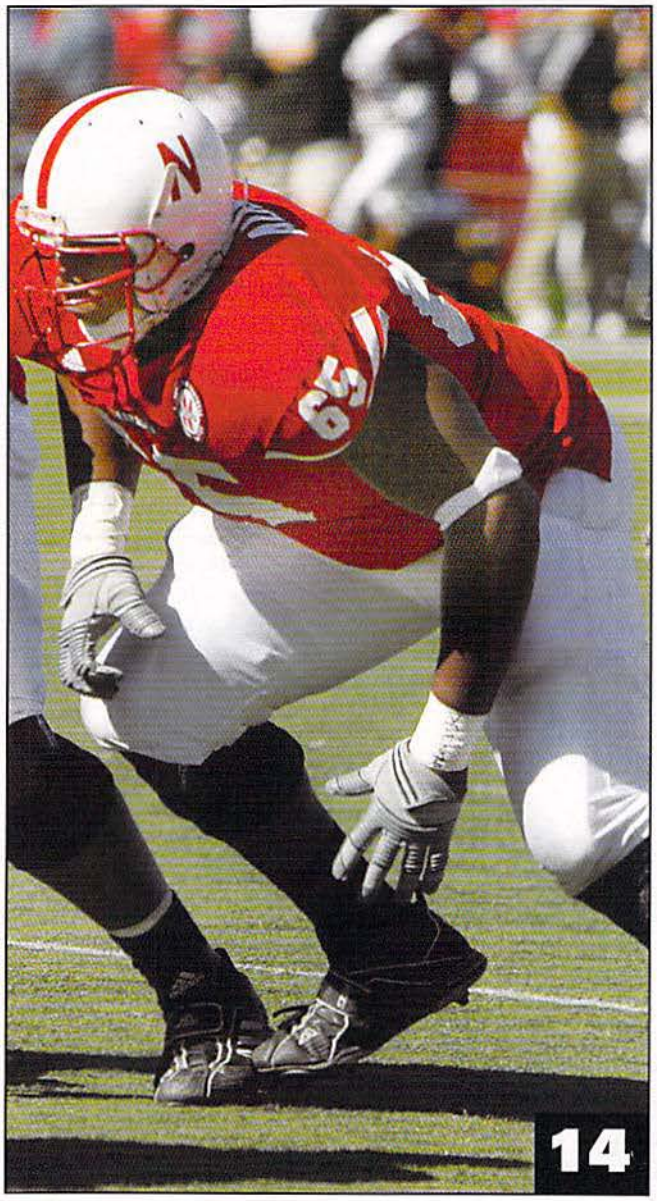

14 RARE OPPORTUNITY

Guard Greg Austin has joined a select group of Nebraska offensive linemen who have played as true freshmen. *By Mike Babcock*

NEXT ISSUE

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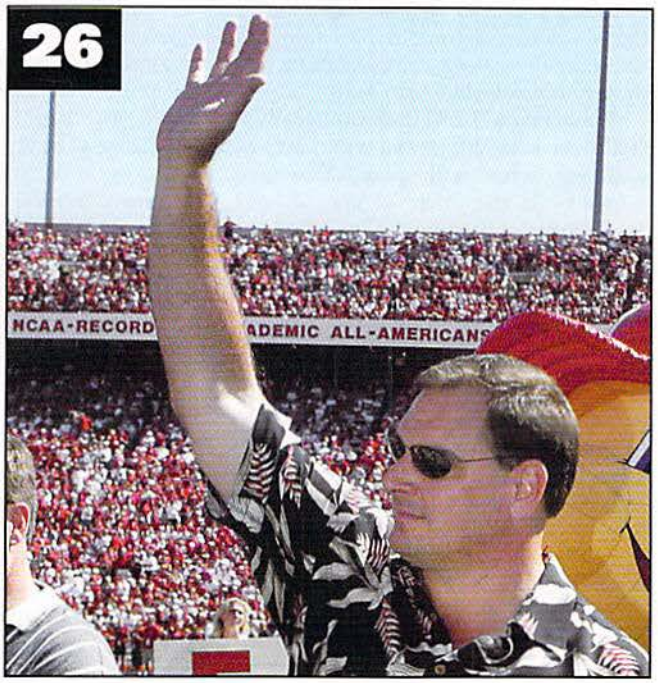


Looking Forward

Nebraska is picked to finish 11th in the Big 12, just ahead of Baylor, in Street & Smith's College Basketball annual. That's typical of the national perception in preseason publications, and it is certainly understandable given the Cornhuskers' struggles in 2002-03.

But Coach Barry Collier is looking forward. "I think every team needs that," he says. "I think whenever we stumble in athletics, there's an opportunity to take a couple of paths, and one is to refuse to accept that (what happened) and work really hard in the future."

Nebraska was 11-19 overall and 3-13 in Big 12 play to finish last in the conference for the first time in 30 years. "We can't go back and change it," says Collier. "What we're not accepting is the fact that we're going to let it continue. So I think behaviors have changed and attitudes have changed.

"We're really speaking about confidence here, building a team back up."

The confidence "comes from what you do day in and day out, day after day, certainly in practice and as the games come, what you do in the games. And that continues to develop," he says.

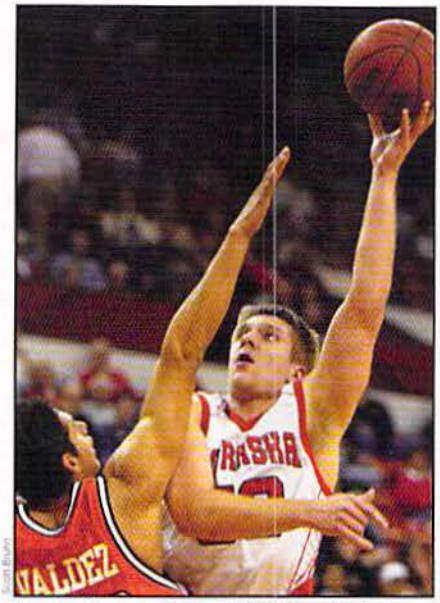
The practices began in mid-October, with the first of two exhibitions scheduled for Nov. 10 and the non-conference season beginning less than two weeks later, on Nov. 22.

Between now and then Collier must settle on how his team will play, as well as who will play. The one depends on the other, of course, and "we think we're at least a couple deep at every position," he says. That will make his fourth Cornhusker team "much more competitive-driven."

Seniors Nate Johnson and Andrew Drevo, both returning starters, are among those who will drive the competition, along with junior captain Jake Muhleisen, who is back on the court after being sidelined by a fractured hip socket, suffered in the conference opener at Kansas.

"I'm real excited to get the season started," says Muhleisen.

The injury won't affect the way he plays, Muhleisen says. "I haven't really been in a game situation, where guys are trying to slide in, take charges. So we'll see when that comes around. But I'm going to play the way I always have, running all over the place, just playing hard all the time."


Senior Andrew Drevo led Nebraska in scoring and rebounding last season.

Johnson and Drevo prepared themselves well during the off-season, according to Collier.

Johnson, who averaged 13.3 points in his first season at Nebraska after transferring from junior college, "is the strongest guy on our team," pound for pound, says Collier.

As for "brute strength," Drevo "is as strong as anybody on our team," he says.

Drevo led the Cornhuskers in scoring (13.9) and rebounding (7.3) last season.

The 6-foot-7 transfer from Morningside has dropped "a noticeable amount of weight," Collier says, and that has "helped with his conditioning. Hopefully, it will translate into five on five."

Corey Simms and John Turek also are returning starters, and Brian Conklin, Jason Dourisseau and Wesley Wilkinson saw action in every game. So Nebraska has experience.

It also has two point guards among the newcomers, Charles Richardson and Marcus Neal.

Muhleisen played the point before the injury, and Johnson filled in there, too. But both are better suited to playing elsewhere, and now they'll have an opportunity to do so.

Richardson and Neal "have played the point through their careers," says Collier. "That's part of what is a positive in the thought that it will allow us to play differently, somewhat."

The expectations have been that the Cornhuskers will play more fast-paced offensively, but "there's not going to be a wholesale change in what we do," Collier says.

"How we do it is hopefully going to be the most noticeable thing."

Personnel will dictate Nebraska's style of play. Two seasons ago with 3-point shooter Cary Cochran, "we were a much quicker shooting team, a better offensive team," says Collier.

Last season, "we were a better defensive team than we were the year before, but we weren't as good of an offense. So we're trying to be good in both areas. There are some changes we've made, but it's been based on personnel. Offensively, we'd simply be looking for a way to be more efficient by shooting the ball better, maybe having better spacing, improving our inside and outside balance."

The Cornhuskers also are looking to improve at the free throw line.

"Those are the things we're kind of focused on, rather than, hey, let's play 100 miles an hour and try to be something we're not. I think it will evolve. I really do," Collier says.

He hasn't cited examples of teams that have succeeded in the face of low expectations to motivate his players. Rather, that must come from "trying to help your team understand their strengths and weaknesses and then work to improve each of the areas of the game that need to be played well in order to win, to develop a work ethic and to reward that positively when it's done well," he says.

"To keep a real close eye and constantly check the pulse of your team and their attitude, to develop leadership within the team, both word leadership and work leadership, those are the things that I think have probably more of an impact than watching 'Seabiscuit' or talking about another team." ■

DRIVE STOPPERS

The Nebraska football team was flagged for six illegal procedure penalties in its 41-24 loss at Missouri. That's a lot. "In all my playing and coaching days, I've never seen six in one game," offensive coordinator and line coach Barney Cotton said the next week. "There's no excuse for it."

After a four-year career at Nebraska, Cotton played four seasons in the NFL, with the Cincinnati Bengals and St. Louis Cardinals, and has coached at the collegiate level since 1989.

Even though the penalties are only for 5 yards, "they're very costly," he said. "I don't know exactly what the figures are for college football, but if you're not in four-down territory in pro football, statistics show that between 80 and 85 percent of the drives are stopped with a 5-yard penalty."

So even a few 5-yard penalties can be too many. "They're all drive stoppers," Cotton said.

HOPKINS SIDELINED AGAIN

Lannie Hopkins has endured more than his share of frustration during his career at Nebraska. And now he must endure more after undergoing surgery in mid-October to correct a recurrent abdominal problem that, along with a shoulder injury, sidelined him for most of the 2001 season.

Lannie Hopkins

Hopkins was the No. 4 rover most of last season, but earned a Blackshirt for his play as a pass rusher. He also was a significant contributor on special teams, blocking three punts. He started — his only career start — the Independence Bowl game and responded with a career-high nine tackles.

He was moved to linebacker in the spring but missed the final two weeks following abdominal surgery. Because of the latest surgery, Nebraska will look into the possibility of regaining this season of eligibility. "There is a chance that something can get done," says Coach Frank Solich.

Hopkins, a member of the 2000 recruiting class, redshirted his first season and played in only three games his second. The NCAA would have to waive its five-to-play-four rule.

On a positive note, defensive end Wali Muhammad began practicing the week of the Texas A&M game after being sidelined by an abdominal problem. Muhammad is a highly regarded transfer from Coffeyville, Kan., Community College. "It was good to get him back," Solich says.

BILLION-DOLLAR INSPIRATION

Omaha billionaire Warren Buffett addressed the Cornhuskers before their 48-12 victory against Texas A&M. According to the Lincoln Journal Star, Buffett gave them a brief pep talk. ■

QUICK HITS

What's Happening In Nebraska Athletics?

CHANGE IN PERCEPTION

The Nebraska men's basketball team doubled its pre-season conditioning program, from three weeks to six weeks, and everyone made it through, unlike a year ago.

As a result, the Cornhuskers were in better condition for the start of practice, junior captain Jake Muhleisen said in mid-October. "They feel how much better shape they are in."

Physical condition at the beginning can be misleading, however, which is the reason Coach Barry Collier tries to "go into it with an open mind. Maybe a player has not conditioned as well as you'd like him to and so you'd think, 'Well, that guy doesn't figure into the plans,' " he says.

"But he ends up being a starter for you, and a pretty good player on your team."

Junior Corey Simms was such a player last season. The coaches were disappointed in Simms' conditioning level when he reported for the start of practice a year ago. "But he fought back and beat that and was able to grab a spot for us. So those things do change," says Collier.

Simms started 26 games and averaged 30 minutes of playing time.

During this past off-season, Simms worked hard on his free throw shooting, Collier says. "That's something we need out of a number of guys, especially our inside guys."

Simms made 66.7 percent of his free throws last season, after hitting only 61.5 percent as a freshman. The Cornhuskers shot only 64.9 percent from the free throw line as a team.

Working not only on free throws but shooting in general is something for which players much take responsibility during the off-season, says Collier, "to put in the repetitions every day, put up 300 to 500 shots every day."

Nebraska shot poorly last season, hitting just 39.8 percent from the field.

BACK IN THE GROOVE

The Cornhuskers hit 27.6 percent of their shots from 3-point range, with forward Andrew Drevo putting up the most from beyond the arc, 149. He hit 48, for 32.2 percent.

Even though he averaged only 14.5 minutes per game, senior Brian Conklin took the second-most 3-point shots, 85 — hitting only 22, or 25.9 percent. In marked contrast, Conklin made 65-of-150 3-pointers as a sophomore, 43.3 percent, after hitting 42.6 percent as a freshman.

"Obviously, there were some things wrong with my shot last year, some mechanical problems," says Conklin. "But they weren't anything that would cause me to shoot the way I did, I think.

"I did make a few corrections to make it a more comfortable shot, but it was mostly mental, I think. It got in my head where I'd miss a few, and it just kept piling up on itself. It became more commonplace. I just kind of stepped back, went back to the things I know, just shooting and having fun again."

TAKE-CHARGE GUYS

Point guards Charles Richardson and Marcus Neal are newcomers. Richardson is a freshman and Neal is a junior college transfer. But neither seemed intimidated during off-season pick-up games.

The 5-foot-8, 155-pound Richardson "looks like your little brother on the floor. But he'll get into anyone's face. He'll take control of a situation," says Conklin. "The point guard spot requires a lot of leadership. And I think these guys are going to provide it, Marcus Neal as well."

With the addition of Richardson and Neal, "I think we're definitely more suited to running," Conklin says. "Our guards are very quick. They have a knack for pushing the ball up the floor.

"They definitely will get out more than the teams we've had in the past. They're very good at filling lanes and finishing around the hoop. They seem to be very smart basketball players, especially for their age, having come from decent high schools and played against decent competition."

Richardson is from Proviso East High in Maywood, Ill. Neal, who played two seasons at Polk Community College in Winter Haven, Fla., went to Annapolis, Md., High School.

BUTKUS AWARD

Senior weakside linebacker Demorrio Williams is among 11 semifinalists for the Butkus Award, presented annually by the Downtown Athletic Club of Orlando, Fla.

A selection committee pared down an original watch list of 90 to Williams and 10 other candidates for the award as the nation's outstanding collegiate linebacker. The committee will announce three finalists on Nov. 13, with the award to be presented on Dec. 12.

Williams is Nebraska's first Butkus Award semifinalist since Carlos Polk made the initial cut in 2000. The Cornhuskers' Ed Stewart was a finalist in 1994, a year after Trev Alberts won the award.

Williams also was included on mid-season All-America teams announced by SI.com and collegefootballnews.com. Sophomore free safety Josh Bullocks was picked to the SI.com team and was listed on the collegefootballnews.com list of "Notable Exceptions."

Only two other schools placed two players on the SI.com team, Georgia and Oklahoma. ■

New Digs

Locker room switch comes with Koch's promotion to No. 1 kickoff spot

Mike BABCOCK

THE TUESDAY AFTER the Texas A&M game was a little out of the ordinary for Sam Koch. That morning, the sophomore walk-on from Seward packed up his stuff and moved it from the north fieldhouse — home to redshirts and those who rarely, if ever, get to play — to the South Stadium locker room.

Koch took over Dale Endorf's vacant locker, which was appropriate. Endorf would have been kicking off had he not suffered a season-ending knee injury in the opener, on his first kickoff, in fact. And after the A&M game, it appeared that Koch would be kicking off the rest of the way.

First Sandro DeAngelis took a shot at replacing Endorf on kickoffs. Then David Dyches was given an opportunity. But neither did a satisfactory job, so early in the week before the A&M game, "we really had basically another tryout at the kicking spot," says Coach Frank Solich.

Sophomore Sam Koch made his debut against Texas A&M.

And Koch, who went into the season with little hope of seeing action as the top backup to senior punter Kyle Larson, performed the best during the impromptu tryout.

"He was putting it the highest and deepest, with some consistency," Solich says.

It was only last week that Koch had begun getting good height and distance on his kickoffs, as a result, he says, of a new kicking tee, similar to those used in the NFL. DeAngelis was using the tee, and Koch decided to give it a try. Against the Aggies a few days later, he was the man.

The folks in Seward, just 20 miles or so down Highway 34 from Lincoln, "were all pretty excited," says Koch. Andy Kadavy, a redshirted freshman walk-on, had gone home for a Seward High football game on Friday night and spread the word that Koch would be kicking off the next day.

He had been the place-kicker at Seward High. But his focus at Nebraska had been punting, which he has done well enough that Solich describes him as the "heir apparent" to Larson.

"Sam has really showed great leg strength," says Solich.

Truth be told, Koch looks more like a linebacker than a kicker of any sort, at 6-foot-1 and 230 pounds. Teammates occasionally call him "Janikowski," he says, "just for fun," comparing him to the Oakland Raiders' kicker Sebastian Janikowski — who is listed at 6-1 and 255 pounds.

Koch takes the comparison in good humor. Besides, his size will help in the event he ever has to tackle somebody plus, "I've still got speed, which is good," he says.

"I wouldn't mind going out there and trying tight end or something."

He wouldn't even mind stepping in with the scout team, though "everybody in the north locker room says it's no fun at all." But as long as he does the job on kickoffs now and develops as Larson's successor next season, no one is likely to complain, or suggest that he find a position to play.

Koch is among numerous examples of how the Cornhuskers' walk-on program continues to pay dividends in ways that are much more significant than they might seem at first glance.

Starters Pat Ricketts and Josh Sewell walked on, as did 13 others listed on offense and defense on the depth chart released prior to the Iowa State game, with Koch among four handling specialties.

Larson, who is on scholarship now, has become one of the nation's best collegiate punters, good enough that "he'll play on Sundays," says defensive coordinator Bo Pelini.

Kellen Huston is the holder on placements, a sometimes overlooked skill that can be costly, as evidenced in a recent San Francisco 49ers game when an extra-point kick failed because of a mishandled center snap involving former Cornhusker Bill LaFleur, also the 49ers' punter.

And with Huston suspended for the A&M game, Ross Pilkington, his replacement, needed one snap to get in sync with short-snapper Lane Kelly, a true freshman walk-on.

Kelly has taken over the long-snapping duties, too, easing Richie Incognito's load.

Succeeding as a walk-on takes persistence and, in most cases, patience. Koch says he knew it was going to be "down the road before I got to play. I kind of sensed that, backing up Kyle."

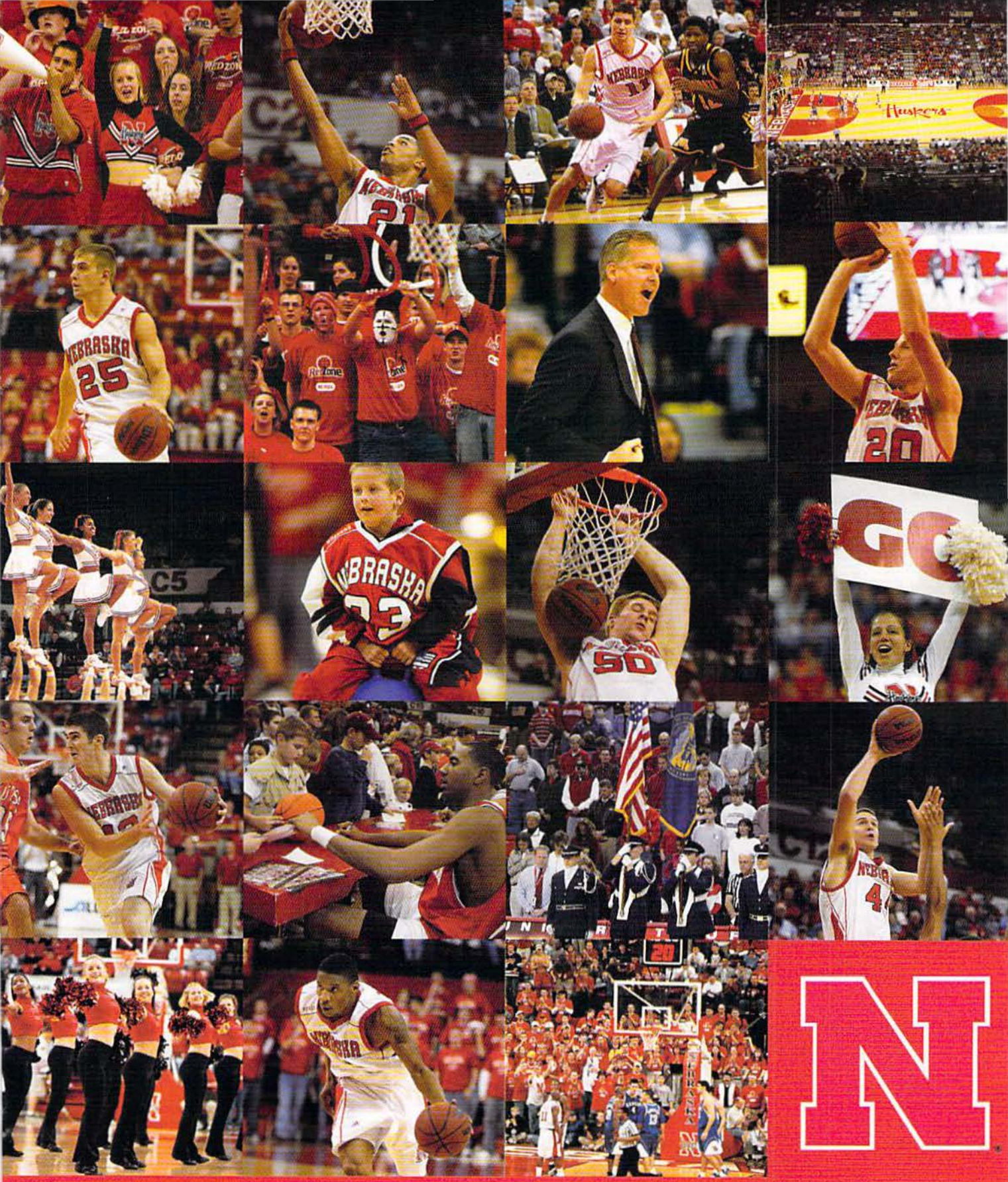
But he has never lost his focus, even though his goal has been more long-term than immediate.

"That's the first time I thought I was going to get to play, next year," he says.

He wouldn't have imagined kicking off. "When I first started kicking, I was like, 'There's no way I'm going to get past Sandro or David,' " says Koch. "I just kind of put my mind to it. I really wanted to get out there and play in a game, and I needed to practice in order to get out there."

He got out there against Texas A&M. And now he's in the South Stadium locker room. ■

***Mike Babcock** is a former sports columnist for the Lincoln Journal Star. He has covered Nebraska football for more than 20 years. Mike can be reached at MBABCOCK1@neb.rr.com or P.O. Box 6782, Lincoln, NE 68506.*



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The Heat Is On

Texas faithful don't take kindly to another big loss to Oklahoma

Curt McKEEVER

UNTIL MACK BROWN beats Oklahoma again, you can bet business at the web site FireMackBrown.com will be booming.

That's sad and probably unfair, nevertheless a harsh reality of the pressure of coaching at a program where fans screaming for a national championship have a patience span that lasts about five seconds.

Brown has brought Longhorn supporters more jubilation than pain, righting a program by winning at least nine games in each of his first five seasons. But his critics are quick to point out none of those squads were conference champions.

In fact, Brown, now in his 20th year as a head coach, is still looking for his first. And if he didn't have that hanging over his head, now he's competing in a Division of the Big 12 where Oklahoma is the odds-on favorite to win a second national crown in four years.

"They're a good team," Sooner offensive tackle Jammal Brown said of the Longhorns after Oklahoma's 65-13 demolition of the Longhorns last month. "But I guess it's a thing against us that they just really can't come through."

It happens regularly to most teams that face the Sooners. But after that result, an Austin, Texas, columnist guess that Brown's club was a lot closer to being No. 5 in the Big 12 than the No. 5 spot it held in the national polls earlier this season. A week later, after Texas' 40-19 win at fast-sinking Iowa State, the same person wrote "there's little question that Texas can win out. . ."

That's an awful wide spectrum of opinion in two weeks' time. Somewhere in between is probably where the Longhorns fall.

Since 1999, Texas is 0-6 against opponents ranked in the top 10. Its inability to rise to the occasion adds fuel to those who label Brown the major recruiter who's also a major bust when it comes to motivational skills.

Mack Brown is in his sixth season as head coach at Texas.

That's debatable and inconclusive, but it still leaves the man with an unflattering tag.

Following Oklahoma's most-recent win against the Longhorns, OU co-defensive coordinator Brent Venables was asked if it surprised him how easily the Sooners dispatched of Texas.

"I guess it does because of the athletes on the other side," Venables said. "It's what you instill and demand of your players. You usually get what you demand."

I guess we don't need to read between the lines on that comment. Venables might as well have called the Longhorns soft.

And he's not the only one with that opinion.

In a recent story in the Houston Chronicle, an unidentified observer, presumed to be a professional scout, compared Texas' practice habits to an NFL team — "except Texas' pace," he said, "might be even more laid-back."

The Longhorns have shown a resiliency bouncing back from the losses to Oklahoma. In the past four years, they're 4-0 and have won by an average of nearly 17 points.

In the win against Iowa State, tailback Cedric Benson rushed for 140 yards on 32 carries. But, in between then and last year's game against the Cyclones, when he ran for 199, Benson posted just one other 100-yard output. That's not a good sign for a team that's supposedly putting more emphasis on the ground game while breaking in two rookie quarterbacks.

As for Chance Mock and Vince Young, the Longhorns are still searching for a formula that works for both. Mock, a fourth-year junior and more-accomplished dropback thrower, started the first six games before being replaced by the more-mobile redshirt freshman Young.

After the Iowa State game, Brown revisited one of the most sensitive issues of his UT tenure: the manner in which he handled the Chris Simms-Major Applewhite quarterback situation during the 2000 and 2001 seasons.

"We have a luxury right now, and the team doesn't care who starts," Brown said. "So that's what matters. After watching (the Iowa State game), I wish we had continued what we originally did and played both Chris and Major. That would have been better."

If Texas' defense doesn't do a better job of shutting off the run, it might not matter who's taking snaps. The Longhorns, who allowed two 100-yard rushers in their 38-28 home loss to Arkansas, rank in the lower third of NCAA Division I-A in that category, and there have been rumblings that defensive coordinator Carl Reese was at risk of losing his job.

Indeed, Texas will be severely challenged even after this week's game against Nebraska. The Longhorns finish the regular-season at red-hot Oklahoma State, play host to Texas Tech and then finish at Texas A&M.

Despite a concern by some UT followers that the Horns are dangerously close to making a quantum leap backward, Brown has carried himself in a manner that would make you think his job is safe — or at least that a buyout would leave him set for life.

But there is unmistakable pressure.

While talking about the quarterback situation last week, Brown noted that preseason All-American wide receiver Roy Williams was 1-for-1, "so there'll be some people wanting him to start this week at quarterback."

Brown was trying to lighten the mood, but nobody was laughing.

Except, maybe, the people at FireMackBrown.com. ■

***Curt McKeever** is a sportswriter, covering the University of Nebraska for the Lincoln Journal Star. In addition to reporting on football he is the primary beat writer for the men's basketball and baseball teams.*

Many Options

Crouch admits he has plenty to learn in transition from player to analyst

Terry DOUGLASS

AS ONE OF THE GREATEST option quarterbacks in Nebraska football history, it should probably come as no surprise that Eric Crouch's future contains plenty of them — options that is.

For now, it appears Crouch is in the infant stages of what some think might be a promising broadcasting career. Hired late in the summer as a college football analyst for Omaha TV station KETV, Crouch made his debut as a color commentator for Fox Sports Net during its pay-per-view broadcast of the Nebraska-Iowa State game.

Just months after retiring from professional football, Crouch seems to be enjoying a job that keeps him close to the game of football — and the Cornhuskers.

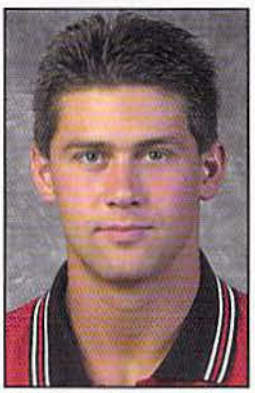
"It's definitely a little bit different," Crouch said. "You're not playing the game, but you stay a little healthier, I guess. It's something where I can stay involved with the program."

The story of how Crouch made the transition from a focal point of Nebraska media to joining the press began with the end of his comeback attempt with the Green Bay Packers. Once it was learned that Crouch would be returning to Omaha, KETV sports director Jon Schuetz immediately lobbied the station to bring Crouch on board.

With all the changes made in Nebraska's program in the offseason, "what better guy to tell us how things might be different or how things might be the same?" Schuetz said.

"It was pretty clear to everyone who listened to him that he could communicate," Schuetz said. "Obviously, nobody knows this program probably better than Eric. Here's a guy that has broken down film with Coach (Frank) Solich, so there's been things that he'll tell me were I think, 'Oh, now I see that.' He's definitely added some insight.

"I think that's his strength. He's going to show us what he knows — things that the average person who is just watching the ball doesn't really think about."



Eric Crouch is a college football analyst for an Omaha TV station.

Because of his local fame, Schuetz said Crouch has probably been under more intense scrutiny than any TV rookie in the history of the state.

"He's Eric Crouch," Schuetz said. "He has to go on air, and people expect this guy is going to polished right from the start. That's hard."

However, Schuetz said Crouch has done a good job, especially considering he had little time to learn his new trade before going on the air.

"It was kind of quick, how it all came about, so we didn't have a lot of time to work with him, but he was willing to put the work in and try to get better at it," Schuetz said. "I think, in just the few weeks that he's been doing it, he's gotten more comfortable, and he's progressing.

"I think he's got a bright future ahead of him in broadcasting."

How bright?

"I'll be honest with you: He's going to have options," Schuetz said. "I would love to have him back again, but my guess is that somebody in the networks is going to notice him, and it looks like that may be happening already."

Crouch is the first to admit that he has plenty to learn in his transition from football player to analyst. Still, he's enjoying the challenge of taking on something new.

"Jon makes it easy for me, and Channel 7 makes it real easy and a lot of fun, so it's something where it's good for me to gain some experience going into this," Crouch said. "The biggest thing I look at is trying to feel more comfortable each time, so that your personality can kind of come out more and more each time you're in front of a camera or a microphone.

"That's kind of important for people to see that. You don't want to be up there like a bad college professor, who speaks in a monotone voice and kind of puts you to sleep."

With his good looks and engaging personality, many figured Crouch might have a future in TV. He's been reminded more than once about ESPN's Kirk Herbstreit, who was hired as one of the sports network's college football analysts shortly after his playing career at Ohio State.

While Crouch hasn't exactly envisioned himself sitting next to ESPN's Chris Fowler and Lee Corso on the "Game Day" set, he might be interested in seeing how far he can go in broadcasting. But even with his new gig, Crouch still answers questions about whether or not he plans to play again.

"A lot of people I talk to ask me who I'm going to play for next? They're not asking if I'm going to ever play again, so not everyone understands and not everyone knows, and I don't expect anything different," Crouch said. "That's where you've got to keep in mind that you do what's best for yourself and your family. Sometimes, there are going to be sacrifices along the way."

Although Crouch has close ties to the program, he doesn't find it difficult to be objective or critical, something he never would have done as a player.

"As someone who is analyzing the game, you tend to be a little bit more critical because you're not on the team anymore, and you can be more opinionated," Crouch said. "I always still try to be as positive as I can, especially with this program."

So, as a college football analyst, the obvious question is what does Crouch think of Nebraska's start after last season?

"I think they're doing better than expected, especially considering that they have pretty much the same team, except for some new coaches," Crouch said. "The defense is ranked near the top of the country, and their offense struggled a little bit early in the season, but it looks like they're coming around and scoring some points now.

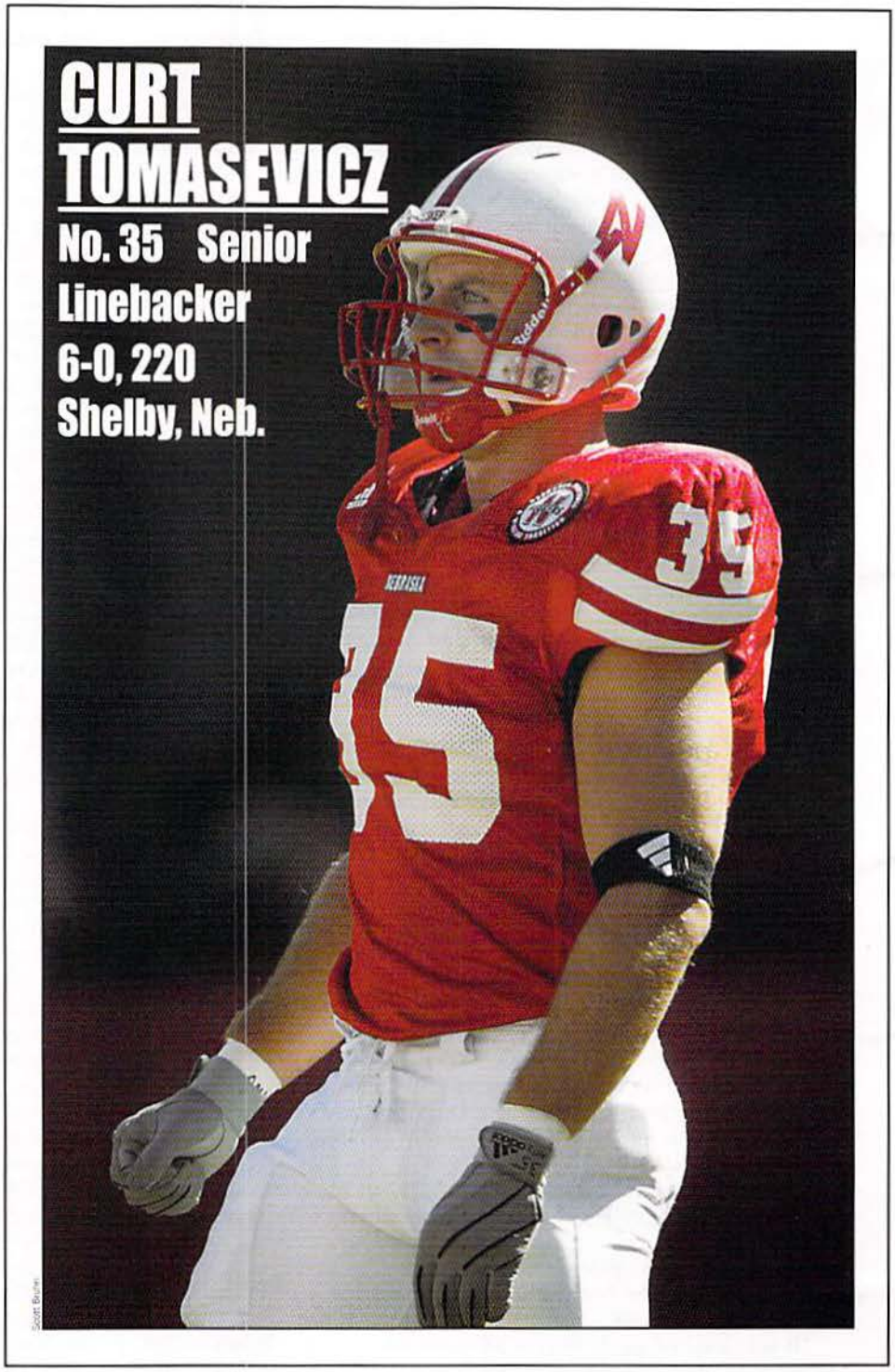
"I think a lot of people are really very happy with what has happened this year. There's still a lot of things to work on, but they're doing a good job so far." ■

Terry Douglass *is the sports editor of the Grand Island Independent. He can be reached at tdbbdouglass@earthlink.net.*

PLAYER PROFILE

Living a Dream

Promotion to kickoff team makes it all worthwhile



If not for a broken collarbone, Curt Tomasevicz might be on a tour of duty with the Air Force, maybe in the Middle East. And he might never have played football at Nebraska.

"It's just kind of a path I wouldn't have expected to go down," he says of the past four-plus years. "There were times when I was really frustrated, but quitting has never been part of my lifestyle. I've never quit anything. I wouldn't know how. So once I started, I never saw a reason to stop."

Tomasevicz started by walking on, following a successful athletic career at Shelby, Neb., High School. And he still spends practice time on the scout team, despite being a senior.

That's difficult, but it's tempered by his promotion to the first kickoff team, the realization of a dream he had after attending his first game at Memorial Stadium when he was 9 or 10 years old.

He imagined "how great it would be just to run down that field once or twice a game, be on the kickoff team, slam my head into a wedge, go stand on the sideline and do it again later.

"Now it has kind of hit me, I'm actually doing that, I'm living that dream."

The scout squad helps the team. But the kickoff team has a more tangible effect on the outcome of a game. So "I feel like my role is vital," he says. "I feel like I'm more a part of it now."

Tomasevicz is a rarity these days, a non-recruited walk-on. Nebraska showed some interest in him before the broken collarbone, suffered in a football game during his senior year. But he had been nominated for an appointment to the Air Force Academy by then, and had planned to accept it.

The problem was, he couldn't pass the Academy's physical test by the deadline because of the broken

collarbone. So he enrolled at Nebraska, with a Regents Scholarship. He was class valedictorian at Shelby High and carries a 3.639 cumulative grade-point average in electrical engineering.

He has been a member of the Big 12 Commissioner's Academic Honor Roll six times.

After settling in first-semester classes his freshman year, he contacted the football office to see about joining the team as a walk-on. He was told he could test in January, and if his scores were high enough, he would be allowed to participate in winter conditioning with the rest of the team.

About 120 hopefuls went through the pre-testing, he says. No more than 10 went through winter conditioning, and only three of the 10 were invited to participate in spring practice.

The others were Jay White and Tim Demerath. Both have since finished.

"I had to basically prove myself that winter," says Tomasevicz, who has always tested well. He was fourth in performance index points (2,450) in last winter's testing.

He was a dedicated lifter at Shelby High, in a small weight room in the school's basement, which "flooded when it rained," he says. "It was in pretty poor condition. They've up-graded it quite a bit. But weights are weights. It's not so much what kind of facilities you have. It's how hard you work."

That attitude served him well in earning the opportunity to continue after that first spring of practice, during which the coaches "were watching us pretty closely to see whether we were worth a darn to keep on the scout team, to beat up for a few years," he says with a smile.

His first year as a scout-team fullback — his second as a student — was spent trying to block the likes of rush end Kyle Vanden Bosch. "I knew the best technique I had, and with every ounce of strength I had, he could basically do what he wanted, throw me out of the way," Tomasevicz said.

"I knew a headache was coming. But I knew 10 other guys were thinking the same thing, and if we came together and got 4 or 5 yards on a play, that was kind of a victory for us."

"There were times when I was really frustrated, but quitting has never been part of my lifestyle."

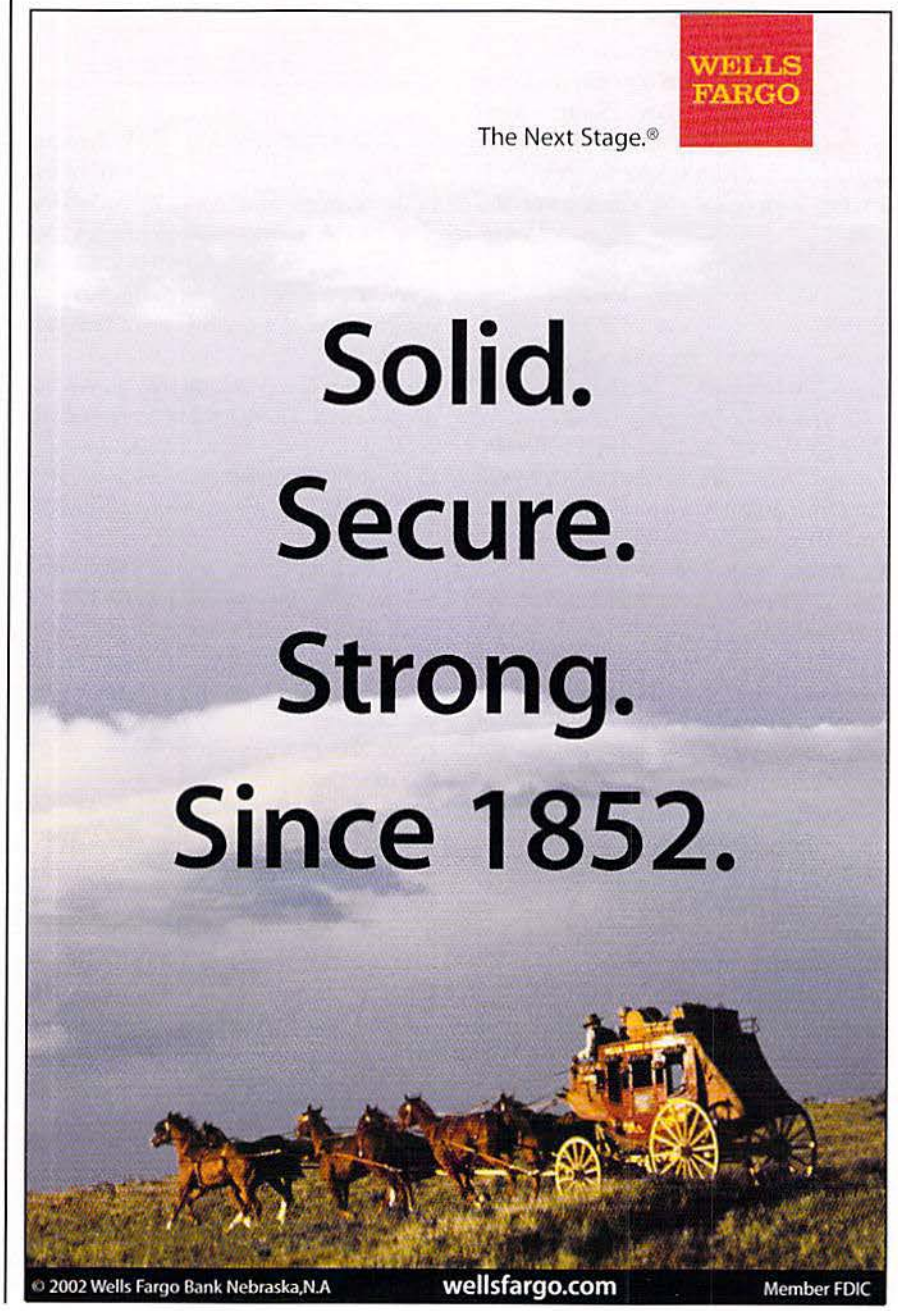
— Nebraska linebacker Curt Tomasevicz

That he was a fullback was another disappointment. He had planned to play linebacker but was moved to fill a scout-team need. He didn't get the chance to play linebacker until last spring.

Though he's seen little action during his career, he has made friends, established relationships and gotten involved in the community. He has been named to the Brook Berringer Citizenship Team.

In retrospect, the broken collarbone was "kind of a blessing in disguise," he says.

He didn't realize it at the time, of course. "But I wouldn't go back and trade it for anything." ■



Rare Opp

Austin joins select group of offensive linemen who have played as true freshmen

By Mike Babcock

FEATURE STORY

The block was a good one, Greg Austin said. He had knocked down the Troy State linebacker, just a few yards from where he stood following a practice the week after the game.

Austin was proud of the block, but it also was "troubling." He had asked offensive coordinator and line coach Barney Cotton if he was supposed to block the linebacker on that play.

Turns out, "it wasn't necessarily the right guy," said Austin. However, Cotton "was like, 'I'm just glad to see linemen going down the field and knocking people down.' "

Austin could be forgiven such a case of mistaken identity. After all, the freshman guard from Cypress, Texas, was playing in his first game at Nebraska, for one thing. And Troy State's defensive line did a lot of stunting, for another. "It got me kind of confused sometimes," Austin said.

One play in particular "caught me off guard," he said. "I messed up bad."

On balance, however, his collegiate debut was satisfactory and left him wanting more.

"Once you start playing, you get greedy, kind of, especially if you mess up," said Austin, whose first series came in the second quarter of the 30-0 victory. "You want to go back in.

"It went well. I mean, I made some mistakes. The game is quicker, much quicker than in high school, so I messed up; you're going to mess up. But you've just got to play."

To that point, it appeared Austin wouldn't be playing this season. Though he had suited up for all of the home games and been included on the Southern Mississippi travel roster, he was probably headed for a redshirt. But that changed because of injuries and the departure of Jamayel Phillips.

During the week of the Troy State game, Austin was told he would play. And on Friday, Cotton called Austin's dad, just to make sure his parents were OK with his shedding the redshirt.

Austin had yet to call home and tell anyone. He was going to call his parents the night before the game, he said, but "I didn't really want to tell everybody I was playing. I just wanted to keep humble. I didn't want to think about it too much. It was better for me," he said.

"If I told everybody, there probably would have been more pressure."

Any inclination to call someone back home and tell them he would be playing was offset by the daily demands of the first semester of college. "I've got a lot of stuff to do around here," Austin said. "There's a whole bunch of other stuff that keeps my mind off stuff like that, football and school."

Because of the football demands on an offensive lineman, few have played at Nebraska as true freshmen.

In fact, Austin is only the fifth since the NCAA reinstated freshman eligibility in 1972, and one of the five, John Garrison, played almost exclusively as a long-snapper his first year.

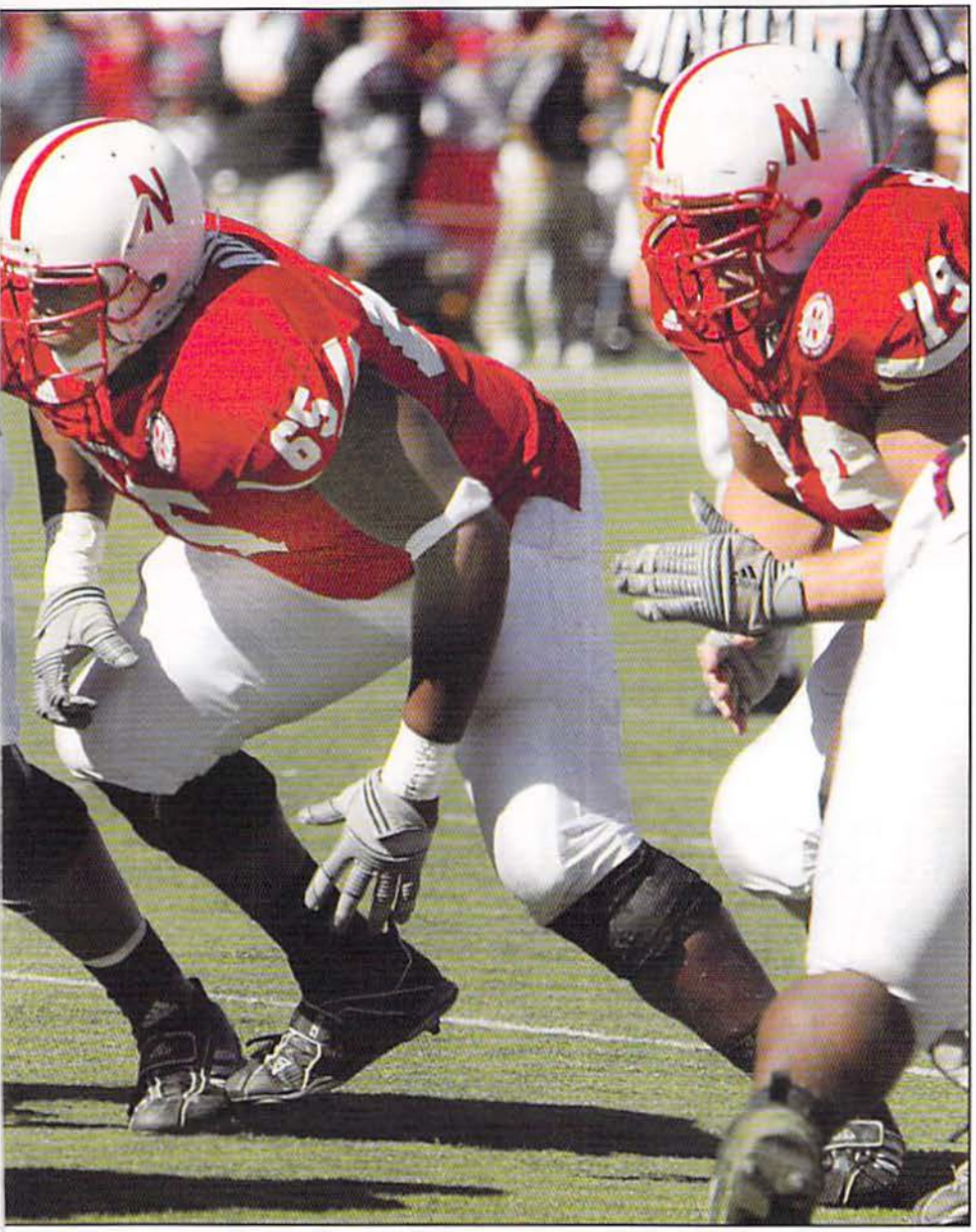
Jake Young, Will Shields and Toniu Fonoti were the others.

Dave Rimington, the only two-time winner of the Outland Trophy, almost certainly would have played as a true freshman if not for a knee injury that forced a medical redshirt.

And another in Austin's recruiting class, Ryan Schuler, would have played this season, if not for a blood-

Scott Bruhn

portunity



Freshman guard Greg Austin (65) is in the middle of the action between tackle Darren DeLone (67) and center Josh Sewell (79).

clot problem, which resurfaced early in fall camp. Still, true freshman linemen are rare.

Nevertheless, Austin came to Nebraska expecting to play at some point this season. "I kind of knew I would come out (of a redshirt). I just didn't know when," he said. "It's an honor, just like everything else. I came in, and they asked me if I was going to redshirt. I said, 'I don't know, probably.' "

In the back of his mind, however, he figured he would play.

Austin made an oral commitment to Nebraska in July before his senior year at Cypress-Fairbanks High, where he earned all-district honorable mention as a guard, despite missing half the season because of a foot injury. He had played offensive tackle as a junior but switched line positions "so the college coaches could see me," he said. "You don't see too many 6-foot-2 (college) tackles, you know."

Even as a guard, his height was a concern to some recruiters, he said. He had wanted to go to Texas when he was younger, in part because Cedric Woodard played for the Longhorns. Woodard, a defensive tackle for the Seattle Seahawks, "was basically like my big brother," Austin said.

Woodard is from Lake Jackson, Texas, where Austin went to visit his grandmother.

But the Longhorns weren't interested in recruiting a friend of Austin's because "they told him he was too short, and he was an offensive lineman also, a little bit taller than me," said Austin.

It stood to reason that if Texas didn't want his friend, it wouldn't want him.

The in-state schools that showed the most recruiting interest were Rice and Baylor. Texas A&M, with new head coach Dennis Franchione, made a late pitch. But by then, his mind was made up.

"I wanted to get out of Texas, really," he said. "I wanted to get out just to get out."

Austin wouldn't be at Nebraska, however, if some of his parents' friends who live in the Houston area weren't Nebraska alums. They suggested he consider the Cornhuskers, which led to his attending Nebraska's football camp during the summer before his senior year in high school.

When he arrived this summer, he had mixed emotions about whether to redshirt. And when the subject came up the week before the Troy State game, he was still ambivalent.

"It's like I wanted to redshirt but I didn't want to redshirt," he said. "I

think I'm ready to play. It's just like I'm missing one or two things that will help me a little bit. But those aren't major things.

"My strength is good enough to play at the Division I level already. I really wasn't worried about that. But my weight, I've got to improve. I think they want me to gain like 10 more pounds."

He weighed 274 when he arrived in Lincoln in the summer. He has added about 20 pounds.

Some players would be hesitant to give up a redshirt four games into the season. The coaches "have asked people, 'Are you ready to play?' And they're like, 'Coach, I really don't think I'm ready. I really don't know if I want to go out of my redshirt, waste a year,' " said Austin.

"But as I was telling a reporter the other day, 'From here on, it's how I play. If I don't play, it'll be my fault because I'm in control of my own destiny.' I'm in a position to play a lot of snaps, and that's the reason I felt I was ready to come out of my redshirt. It's up to me whether I play or not.

"It's not downsizing the competition, nothing like that. It's just that I know I can go out there and make some noise. Right now, it's up to me to decide. It's all how I play."

As he plays, he'll become more comfortable. And he'll know that those he is blocking are those he is supposed to be blocking. ■

True Freshmen Offensive Linemen Since 1972

Jake Young (1986-87-88-89), center, Midland, Texas

Young played guard for the freshman team and saw enough action with the varsity to earn a letter. He was switched to center during the spring of his freshman year and started there his final three seasons. He was the first true sophomore to start in Nebraska's offensive line since Rik Bonness in 1973.

Young earned All-America recognition his final two seasons.

Will Shields (1989-90-91-92), guard, Lawton, Okla.

Shields, the Cornhuskers' second-ever scholarship recruit from Oklahoma, moved to the varsity early in fall camp and played in nine games as a freshman, backing up Jim Wanek at left guard. He was moved to right guard during the spring and started for three seasons there.

Shields was a three-time, first-team all-conference selection — the first Nebraska offensive lineman to be so honored as a sophomore since Dave Rimington in 1980 — and earned All-America honors as a senior. A third-round pick of the Kansas City Chiefs, he is among the best linemen in the NFL.

Toniu Fonoti (1999-00-01), guard, Hauula, Hawaii

Fonoti played in every game as a freshman, then started for two seasons, earning All-America honors in 200, helping to open holes for Heisman Trophy winner Eric Crouch. He by-passed his senior season and was a second-round draft pick of the San Diego Chargers. He is on injured reserve.

John Garrison (1999-00-01-02), center, Kansas City, Mo.

Garrison arrived as a rush end but his ability as a long-snapper got him on the field as a freshman. He also saw limited action at center, backing up Dominic Raiola and Matt Baldwin.

He was the starter his final two seasons as well as serving as a co-captain.

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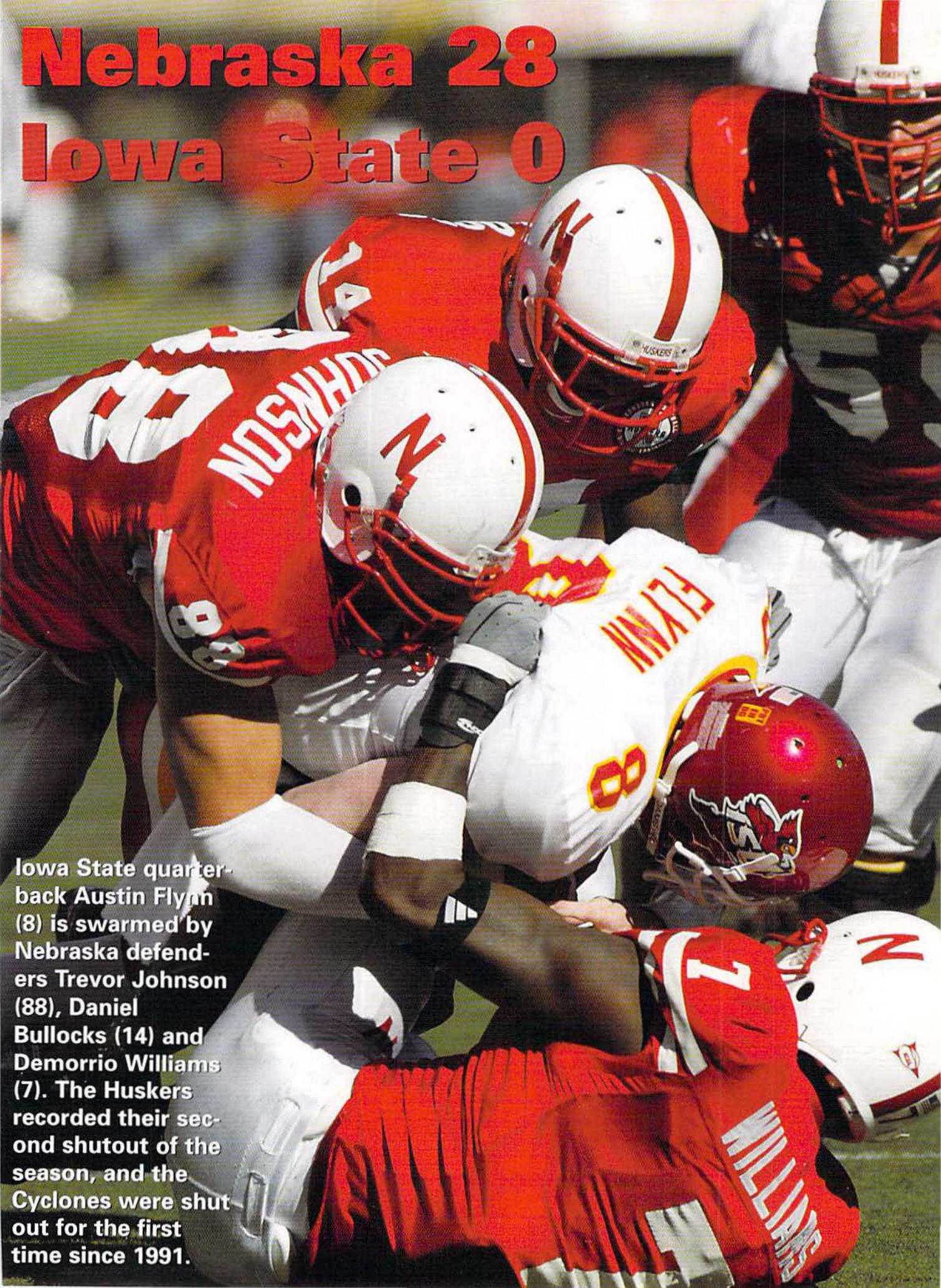
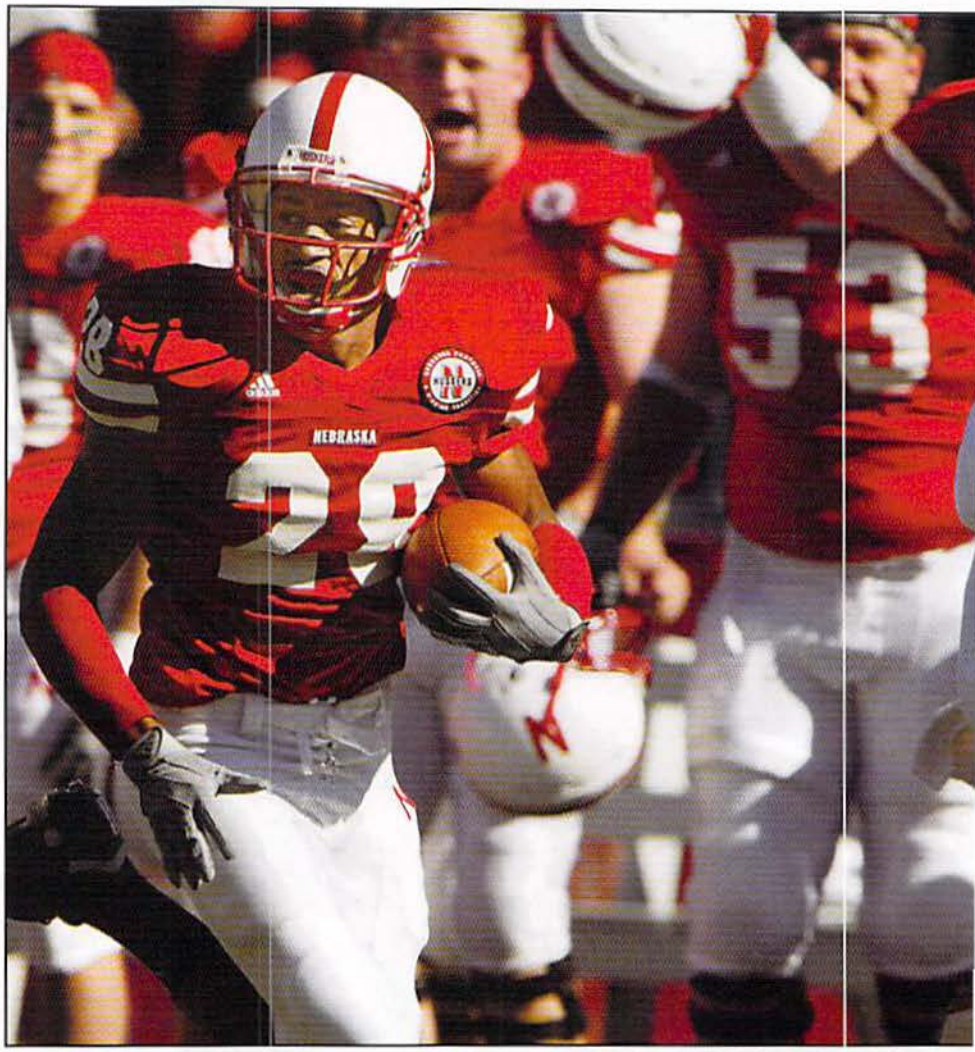


Iowa State quarterback Austin Flynn (8) is swarmed by Nebraska defenders Trevor Johnson (88), Daniel Bullocks (14) and Demorrio Williams (7). The Huskers recorded their second shutout of the season, and the Cyclones were shut out for the first time since 1991.

Strange

Nebraska's 28-0 victory produces statistical oddities



Wide receiver Isaiah Fluellen, who finished as the leading rusher, pulls away from Iowa State's DeAndre Jackson on a 39-yard touchdown run in the first quarter.

Those who shelled out $29.95 for the pay-per-view telecast of Nebraska's 28-0 victory against Iowa State might have questioned whether the money had been well spent.

The Cornhuskers won, so that was worth something. And the defense posted its second shutout of the season, which certainly has entertainment value, right to the final snap.

Plus, a pair of blocked punts were entertaining, in an out-of-the-ordinary sort of way.

But from an offensive point of view, the game was mundane, producing statistical oddities that didn't seem to add up to be the dominating performance it should have been for Nebraska.

Cornhusker wide receiver Isaiah Fluellen was the game's leading rusher, for example, gaining 78 yards on five carries, all reverses and the first good for 39 yards and a touchdown.

The last time a receiver led Nebraska in rushing was in 1977, when Curtis Craig gained 82 yards on five carries against Oklahoma State. And Craig was a wingback in a different system.

Equally curious were quarterback Jammal Lord's numbers, 46 yards and a touchdown rushing and 2-of-3 passing for 19 yards. Ordinarily, Nebraska wouldn't win without better production from Lord. But this was no ordinary game. Lord watched the final two-and-a-half quarters from the sideline.

Rumors that he had suffered a leg injury or a hip-pointer quickly spread, as he watched while freshman Joe Dailey took the rest of the snaps. But Lord wasn't injured in the game.

He has been "banged up for three or four games," Coach Frank Solich said. "I think that just goes to show you the kind of courage and how tough of a competitor he is. You can't drag him off the field. He went into this game better than what he has gone into the previous three games."

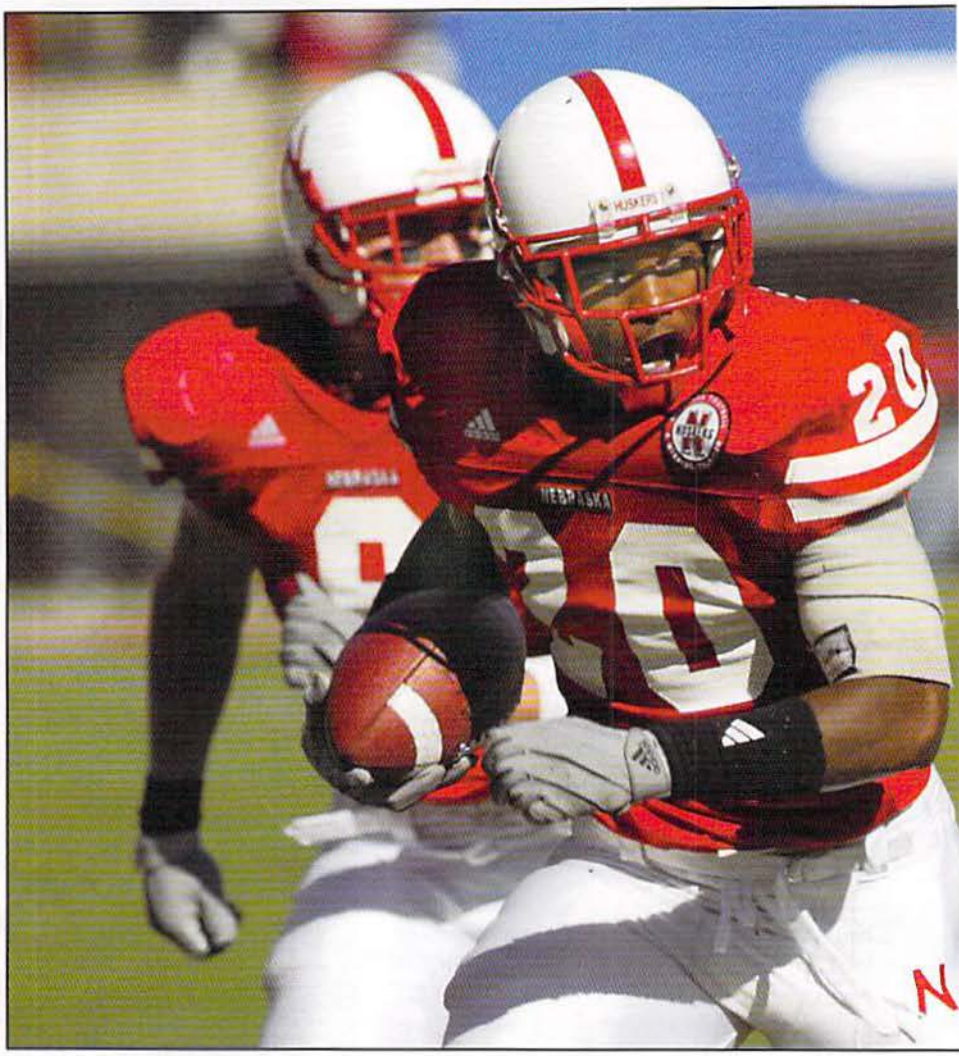
Lord estimated that he was "99.4 percent" healthy.

The last time he was 100 percent? It's been a while," he said.

Whatever the percentage, he "was a little bit sore," said Solich. And when the score reached 28-0, or a

By Mike Babcock
Photos by Scott Bruhn

Numbers



Free safety Josh Bullocks returns a blocked punt 26 yards for a touchdown to give Nebraska a 21-0 lead.

Game Story

Josh Davis touchdown set up by a Benard Thomas fumble recovery, "we could rest him."

Lord accepted the rest. "Any time you have a little rest, that will help," he said. "So it's cool."

More to the point, however, "in the long run, it's going to help the team," Lord said. "It was a plus for me and Joe. I understand what we had to do. Like I said, it's going to benefit the team."

Those who have clamored for more of Dailey got their wish. He entered the game with 7:35 remaining in the first half and took every snap the rest of the way.

Garth Glissman would have taken the final snap if time had not elapsed.

Dailey's play was "OK, not great, not poor," said Solich.

That was hardly a ringing endorsement, but Dailey concurred, giving himself a grade of C. He was second to Fluellen in rushing, with 55 yards on 15 carries, and he completed 2-of-4 passes for 16 yards with one interception. "I wasn't satisfied with anything," he said. "I believe everything should have been a little bit better. I'm where I need to be, maybe a little behind in terms of seeing the whole picture."

A year from now, however, when Lord is gone and he has an opportunity to be the starter, "I'll be there, I promise you," Dailey said. "I'll be back where I need to be."

As usual, the defense was where it needed to be against an Iowa State team that endured a sixth consecutive loss — in the face of the Cyclones' quarterback. Nebraska allowed only 230 yards of offense and forced three turnovers, the Thomas fumble recovery and two

pass interceptions.

Buck linebacker T.J. Hollowell picked off the first and cornerback Kellen Huston intercepted the second on a fourth-and-2 from the Nebraska 20-yard line with 36 seconds remaining.

That was Iowa State's only serious scoring threat. The Cyclones had crossed midfield only three times prior to their final series and had never been closer than the Nebraska 42-yard line.

Iowa State's offensive ineptitude was matched by punting woes so severe that Coach Dan McCarney opted to go on fourth down in a couple of instances rather than risk a punt.

Early in the first quarter, Josh Bullocks blocked Tony Yelk's second punt to give the Cornhuskers the ball at the Iowa State 19-yard line to set up the only touchdown they needed. And near the end of the quarter, Demorrio Williams blocked a Yelk punt, which Bullocks returned for a score.

"I knew the ball was on the ground, for anybody to go get it," said Bullocks.

Nebraska had not blocked a punt this season and it was an "emphasis," Solich said.

The touchdown was Bullocks' first and "felt really great." The sophomore free safety also came close to getting a school-record eighth interception, on a tip by cornerback Fabian Washington, but he was ruled out of bounds. "I believe I was in-bounds," said Bullocks. "But I'll have to see the film."

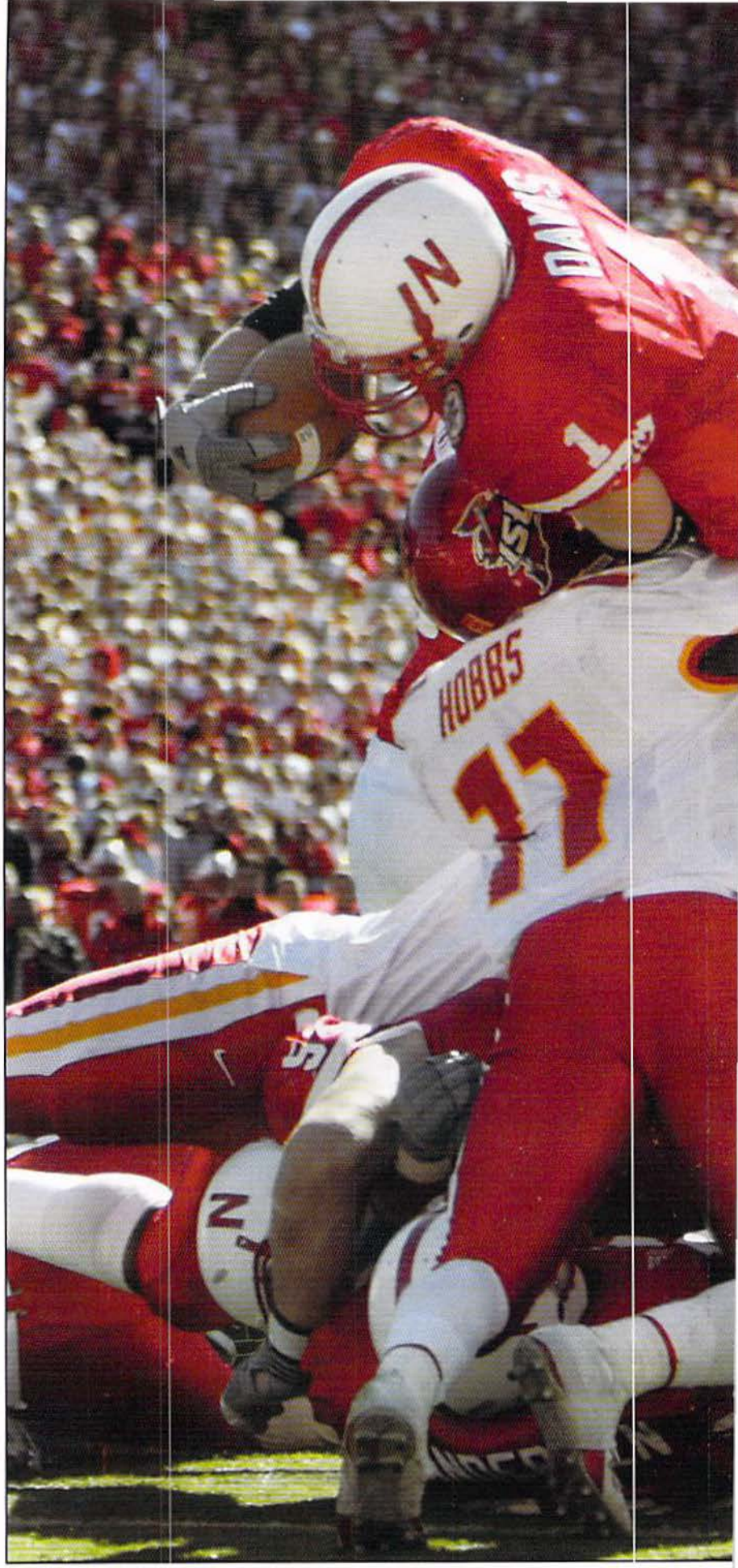
Middle linebacker Barrett Ruud, chosen Big 12 Defensive Player of the Week for his efforts against Texas A&M, also missed an opportunity for a big play when he couldn't pick up a fumble, which he might have taken in for his third touchdown of the season. "So I can criticize myself," he said.

His self-criticism didn't seem appropriate, however, considering he was credited with 10 tackles.

On balance, the pay-per-view expense was probably justified except for those whose interest was in offense. Nebraska had no sustained scoring drives. Its second touchdown came on a 79-yard drive, of three plays: Fluellen's 9-yard run, Lord's 31-yard run and Fluellen's 39-yard run.

"It was a quick start," Solich said. "It was not the finish we were looking for, but we did get an opportunity to play a number of guys. We got a lot of time for Joe Dailey at quarterback."

Nebraska used 70 players. So in that sense, maybe, viewers got their money's worth. ■



Nebraska senior I-back Josh Davis goes over the top from 1 yard out to score what prov
remaining in the second quarter. ISU cornerback Ellis Hobbs tries to stop Davis.

to be the game's final touchdown with 8:46

GAME NOTES

Notes And Quotes From The Iowa State Game

ANOTHER GOOSE EGG

The shutout was Nebraska's second of the season. The Cornhuskers blanked Troy State 30-0. The last time Iowa State was shutout was Oct. 19, 1991, against Kansas. The Cyclones' 138 games without being shut out was the 11th longest streak in the nation.

Nebraska last shut out Iowa State in back-to-back seasons, 1984 and 1985. The Cornhuskers have not allowed an offensive touchdown in eight quarters, and they have not allowed an offensive touchdown at home in the last 14 quarters, going back to the second quarter against Penn State.

Getting the shutout was a "pride thing," said middle linebacker Barrett Ruud.

Free safety Josh Bullocks agreed. "We always like to have goose eggs," he said.

"That's what it all comes down to. If you get a big old goose egg, you had a great defensive day," said defensive end Trevor Johnson. "It feels real good. We worked hard on stopping the rush.

"Our energy level was very high. That's part of why we played so well. Our effort was there."

REVENGE OR NOT

During his weekly teleconference on the Tuesday before the game, Nebraska Coach Frank Solich emphasized that the Cornhuskers weren't motivated by revenge following last season's 36-14 loss to Iowa State at Ames. Revenge wasn't a factor, said offensive tackle Dan Vili Waldrop. "For me as a senior, I take every game seriously. This was one of my last home games. I've only got one more."

Nebraska's final home game is Nov. 15 against Kansas State.

MORE TURNOVERS

The Cornhuskers forced three turnovers to increase their season's total to 32. With at least five games, counting a bowl, and possibly six remaining, they are within reach of the school single-season record of 47 turnovers, set by Coach Bob Devaney's final team in 1972.

Nebraska has converted the 32 turnovers into 113 points, including seven against Iowa State.

LEADING THE WAY

Wide receiver Isaiah Fluellen scored Nebraska's second touchdown on a 39-yard run off a reverse late in a 21-point first quarter. He was aided by blocks from tackle Richie Incognito and quarterback Jammal Lord. "You've just got to play your part," Lord said of his contribution as a blocker.

Fluellen's game-high 78 rushing yards were the most by a Cornhusker receiver since 1986, when wingback Dana Brinson gained 83 yards on four carries against Missouri.

"We thought going in that the reverses had an excellent chance," said Solich. "We had three different reverses ready for them and a couple of them were pretty big plays.

"Isaiah's speed is showing since he has started playing on a regular basis for us. It is showing in the running game and it is showing in the passing game."

Fluellen has caught three passes for 85 yards and two touchdowns. He didn't have any catches against Iowa State. The Cornhuskers threw only seven passes, completing four, with one intercepted.

WOULD YOU BELIEVE

Despite the outcome, Iowa State achieved some moral victories. Nebraska's 28 points were the fewest it had scored against the Cyclones in Lincoln since their last victory at Memorial Stadium in 1977, 24-21, and Nebraska's 317 total yards and 282 rushing yards were its fewest against the Cyclones in Lincoln since 1981, when he gained 272 yards, including 205 on the ground. Go figure.

That prompted Iowa State Coach Dan McCarney to remark: "I am very proud of the effort of our team today, especially of our defense. We only gave up one long scoring drive."

McCarney also praised the Cornhusker defense. "Nebraska is much better on defense than they were last season. You really see dramatic improvement," he said. "They are tough, fundamentally sound, playing with confidence and going after the ball in an attacking style.

"It's a defense they should be really proud of."

PUNTING WOES

Iowa State's costly blocked punts weren't a result of Nebraska's schemes, according to McCarney. "It was a matter of just getting overpowered and getting to the ball," he said.

AMONG THE MISSING

Senior fullback DeAntae Grixby has been lost for the season after re-injuring an ankle during practice early in the week. Strong safety Philip Bland, a starter at the beginning of the season, was sidelined by injury for a third consecutive game, and back-up offensive guard Tim Green missed because of injury. ■

Scouting Report

2003 Schedule

1	Aug. 30	Oklahoma St. (7-1), W 17-7	1-0
2	Sept. 6	Utah State (2-6), W 31-7	2-0
3	Sept. 13	Penn State (2-6), W 18-10	3-0
4	Sept. 25	@ Southern Miss (4-3), W 38-14	4-0
5	Oct. 4	Troy State (4-4), W 30-0	5-0
6	Oct. 11	@ Missouri (6-2), L 41-24	5-1
7	Oct. 18	Texas A&M (3-5), W 48-12	6-1
8	Oct. 25	Iowa State (2-6), W 28-0	7-1
9	Nov. 1	@ Texas (6-2), 11 a.m., ABC	
10	Nov. 8	@ Kansas (5-3), TBA	
11	Nov. 15	Kansas State (6-3), TBA	
12	Nov. 28	@ Colorado (3-5), 11 a.m., ABC	
	Dec. 7	Big 12 Championship at Kansas City, Mo., 7 p.m.	

Big 12 At A Glance

North

	Conf.		All	
Nebraska	3	1	7	1
Missouri	2	2	6	2
Kansas State	2	2	6	3
Kansas	2	2	5	3
Colorado	1	3	3	5
Iowa State	0	4	2	6

South

	Conf.		All	
Oklahoma	4	0	8	0
Oklahoma State	3	1	7	1
Texas	3	1	6	2
Texas Tech	2	2	5	3
Baylor	1	3	3	5
Texas A&M	1	3	3	5

Saturday, Oct. 25

Nebraska 28, Iowa State 0
Texas 56, Baylor 0
Oklahoma 34, Colorado 20
Kansas State 42, Kansas 6
Missouri 62, Texas Tech 31
Oklahoma State 38, Texas A&M 10

Saturday, Nov. 1

Nebraska at Texas
Oklahoma State at Oklahoma
Iowa State at Missouri
Baylor at Kansas State
Colorado at Texas Tech
Kansas at Texas A&M

Upcoming Opponents' Schedules

Texas (6-2)

Aug. 31	New Mexico State, W 66-7
Sept. 13	Arkansas, L 38-28
Sept. 20	@ Rice, W 48-7
Sept. 27	Tulane, W 63-18
Oct. 4	Kansas State, W 24-20
Oct. 11	Oklahoma @ Dallas, L 65-13
Oct. 18	@ Iowa State, W 40-19
Oct. 25	@ Baylor, W 56-0
Nov. 1	Nebraska
Nov. 8	@ Oklahoma State
Nov. 15	Texas Tech
Nov. 22	@ Texas A&M

Kansas (5-3)

Aug. 30	Northwestern, L 28-20
Sept. 6	UNLV, W 46-24
Sept. 13	@ Wyoming, W 42-35
Sept. 20	Jacksonville State, W 41-6
Sept. 27	Missouri, W 35-14
Oct. 11	@ Colorado, L 50-47 (ot)
Oct. 18	Baylor, W 28-21
Oct. 25	@ Kansas State, L 42-6
Nov. 1	@ Texas A&M
Nov. 8	Nebraska
Nov. 15	@ Oklahoma State
Nov. 22	Iowa State

Game 9

At Texas
Nov. 1

Location: Austin, Texas
Enrollment: 49,411
2003 record: 6-2
Coach: Mack Brown, 6th year
Series: Texas leads 5-4

11 a.m. CST, ABC
Texas Memorial Stadium, Austin

Longhorn to Watch

Senior wide receiver Roy Williams continues to rewrite the Texas record books. The two-time All-Big 12 selection has 40 catches for 536 yards and seven touchdowns this season. Williams, an Odessa (Permian), Texas, product, is the Longhorn career leader in receptions (211), yards (3,423) and touchdowns (34).

Quick Facts

Junior quarterback Chance Mock and redshirt freshman Vince Young have both put up good numbers. Mock has passed for 1,142 yards and 14 touchdowns, while Young has passed for 567 yards and rushed for 550 yards and eight touchdowns.

Texas outgained Baylor 477-260 despite missing starting tailback Cedric Benson, who didn't make the trip after being charged earlier in the week with misdemeanor criminal trespassing.

Senior Brett Robin got his first career start, and he and Selvin Young combined for 93 yards and three touchdowns on 17 carries.

Texas has now outscored its opponents 157-40 in the second quarter this season, including a 21-0 margin versus Baylor.

On Deck

At Kansas
Nov. 8

Location: Lawrence, Kan.
Enrollment: 27,463
2003 record: 5-3
Coach: Mark Mangino, 2nd year
Series: Nebraska leads 85-21-3

Time: TBA
Memorial Stadium, Lawrence, Kan.

Tentative 2-Deeps

Nebraska Offense

WR X	2	Ross Pilkington*	6-0	190	So.
	28	Isaiah Fluellen	6-0	180	RFr.
LT	51	Richie Incognito*	6-3	300	So.
	69	Nick Povendo*	6-3	300	Jr.
LG	78	Mike Erickson**	6-4	305	Jr.
	75	Brandon Koch	6-3	310	So.
C	79	Josh Sewell*	6-2	300	Sr.
	64	Kurt Mann	6-3	290	RFr.
RG	71	Jake Andersen*	6-1	300	Jr.
	65	Greg Austin	6-1	285	Fr.
RT	68	Dan Vili Waldrop***	6-5	350	Sr.
	68	Darren DeLone	6-5	320	Jr.
TE Y	11	Matt Herian*	6-5	240	So.
	82	Phil Peetz**	6-2	270	Sr.
QB	5	Jammal Lord***	6-2	220	Sr.
	12	Joe Dailey	6-0	200	Fr.
FB	4	Judd Davies***	6-0	250	Sr.
	45	Steve Kriewald**	5-10	250	Jr.
IB	1	Josh Davis**	5-11	205	Sr.
	9	David Horne*	6-0	200	So.
WR Z	10	Mark LeFlore*	5-11	185	So.
	13	Tim Liley*	6-2	205	Sr.
PK	27	David Dyches	6-1	190	Fr.

Nebraska Defense

LDE	5	Benard Thomas**	6-4	265	Jr.
	96	Titus Adams*	6-3	290	So.
NT	59	Ryon Bingham**	6-3	290	Sr.
	94	Patrick Kabongo***	6-6	320	Sr.
DT	66	Le Kevin Smith*	6-2	305	So.
	74	Brandon Teamer	6-5	270	Fr.
RDE	88	Trevor Johnson***	6-4	255	Sr.
	90	Adam Carriker	6-6	260	RFr.
BLB	2	T.J. Hollowell***	6-0	230	Sr.
	11	Ira Cooper**	6-2	230	Jr.
MLB	38	Barrett Ruud*	6-2	240	Jr.
	54	Chad Sievers*	6-3	230	Jr.
WLB	7	Demorrio Williams	6-1	210	Sr.
	39	Chad Buller*	5-11	215	Sr.
LCB	3	Fabian Washington*	5-11	175	So.
	4	Terrell Butler*	5-10	190	Sr.
FS	20	Josh Bullocks*	6-1	195	So.
	31	Jerrell Pippens***	6-2	195	Sr.
SS	14	Daniel Bullocks*	6-1	200	So.
	23	Shane Siegel*	6-2	210	So.
RCB	28	Pat Ricketts***	5-11	180	Sr.
or	1	Lornell McPherson**	5-9	175	Jr.
P	19	Kyle Larson**	6-0	205	Sr.

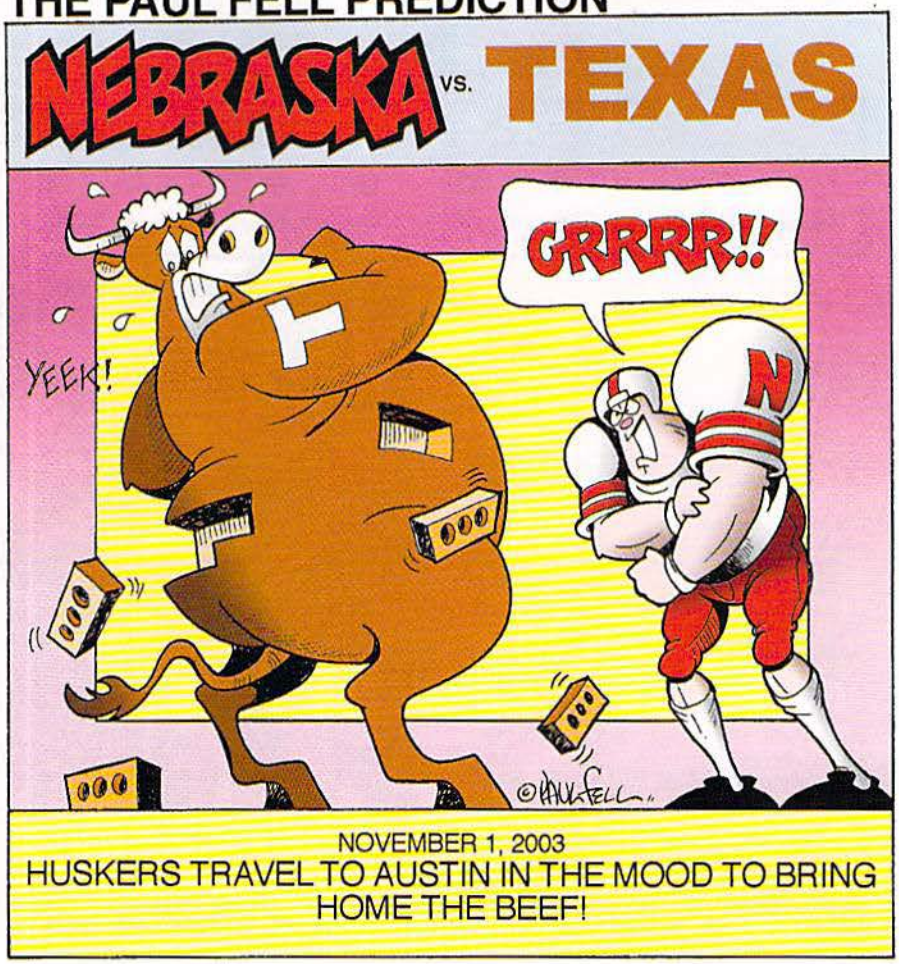
Texas Offense

WR	4	Roy Williams***	6-4	210	Sr.
	1	Sloan Thomas***	6-2	200	Sr.
LT	73	Jonathan Scott*	6-7	305	So.
	75	Lionell Garr**	6-5	350	Jr.
LG	61	Tillman Holloway***	6-3	315	Sr.
	69	Terrance Young	6-8	350	So.
C	52	Jason Glynn	6-2	275	Jr.
	64	Kasey Studdard	6-3	285	RFr.
RG	72	Will Allen*	6-6	297	So.
	51	Mike Garcia	6-3	310	So.
RT	63	Justin Blalock	6-4	330	RFr.
	78	Will Winston*	6-7	350	So.
TE	16	David Thomas*	6-3	228	So.
	80	Bo Scaife**	6-3	250	Sr.
QB	5	Chance Mock	6-2	215	Jr.
	10	Vince Young	6-5	220	RFr.
RB	32	Cedric Benson**	6-0	215	Jr.
	3	Selvin Young*	6-0	205	So.
FB	84	Brock Edwards***	6-5	250	Sr.
	37	Will Matthews**	6-3	250	Jr.
WR	82	B.J. Johnson***	6-1	200	Sr.
	12	Tony Jeffery**	5-11	185	Jr.
PK	14	Dusty Mangum**	5-11	170	Jr.

Texas Defense

DE	80	Tim Crowder	6-4	235	Fr.
	98	Bryan Pickryl*	6-5	240	So.
DT	90	Rod Wright*	6-5	300	So.
	92	Larry Dibbles	6-2	285	So.
DT	95	Marcus Tubbs***	6-4	310	Sr.
	65	Stevie Lee**	6-4	315	Jr.
DE	43	Kalen Thornton***	6-3	260	Sr.
	6	Mike Williams*	6-3	240	So.
WLB	11	Derrick Johnson**	6-4	230	Jr.
	32	Marcus Myers	6-3	240	RFr.
MLB	39	Brian Robison	6-3	245	RFr.
	2	Aaron Harris*	6-0	235	So.
SLB	45	Reed Boyd***	6-3	235	Sr.
	21	Eric Foreman	6-4	215	Fr.
CB	3	Nathan Vasher***	5-11	180	Sr.
	7	Michael Huff*	6-1	200	So.
SS	7	Michael Huff*	6-1	200	So.
	22	Phillip Geigger**	5-11	200	Jr.
FS	9	Dakarai Pearson***	5-10	185	Sr.
	22	Phillip Geigger**	5-11	200	Jr.
CB	8	Cedric Griffin*	6-2	190	So.
	7	Michael Huff*	6-1	200	So.
P	35	Richmond McGee*	6-4	200	So.

THE PAUL FELL PREDICTION



Picks

Nebraska At Texas

Brian Hill
Editor

Nebraska has the better record and the higher rating, but Texas has loads of talent and is playing at home. A struggling Husker team put together a great effort and almost pulled off the upset last year in Lincoln. This time around, Nebraska's defense is playing great, but the offense has been inconsistent. To win this game, the Huskers would have to put it all together. We haven't really seen that yet this season. **Texas 20, Nebraska 16**

Mike Babcock
Contributing Editor

If Nebraska can cut through the perception of Texas invincibility to the reality of a team that has suffered embarrassing losses against Arkansas and Oklahoma, it can win in Austin. **Nebraska 16, Texas 15**

Terry Douglass
Grand Island Independent
Sports Editor

Nebraska has an opportunity to strike a blow against the Texas hex because the Longhorns don't appear to fare well against teams that feature physical play. However, here's guessing that home-field advantage and a talented Texas team will be a bit too much for the Huskers this time. **Texas 24, Nebraska 20**

GAME STATS

NEBRASKA VS. IOWA STATE

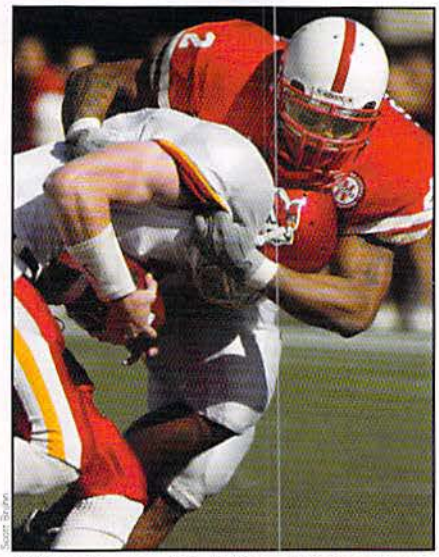
Oct. 25, 2003 • Memorial Stadium • Lincoln, Neb.

SCORE BY QUARTERS

Iowa State	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**—**	**0**
Nebraska	**21**	**7**	**0**	**0**	**—**	**28**

TEAM STATS

	IS	NU
First Downs	14	13
Rushing	4	12
Passing	9	1
Penalty	1	0
Rushing Attempts	30	54
Yards Gained Rushing	86	298
Yards Lost Rushing	16	16
Net Yards Rushing	70	282
Net Yards Passing	160	35
Passes Attempted	41	7
Passes Completed	20	4
Had Intercepted	2	1
Total Plays	71	61
Total Net Yards	230	317
Avg. Gain Per Play	3.2	5.2
Fumbles-Lost	4-1	2-1
Penalties-Yards	5-25	10-67
Punts-Yards	8-206	4-178
Avg. Per Punt	25.8	44.5
Punt Returns-Yards	0-0	4-67
Interceptions-Yards	1-16	2-10
Fumble Returns-Yards	0-0	0-0
Kickoff Returns-Yards	2-32	1-34
Possession Time	28:26	31:34



Scott Bruhn

NU linebacker T.J. Hollowell takes down ISU quarterback Austin Flynn.

SCORING

NU — Jammal Lord 1-yard run (David Dyches kick)

NU — Isaiah Fluellen 39-yard run (Dyches kick)

NU — Josh Bullocks 26-yard blocked punt return (Dyches kick)

NU — Josh Davis 1-yard run (Dyches kick)

Att. — 77,483

Weather — sunny

Temp. — 50

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

NEBRASKA

RUSHING

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Fluellen, I.	5	78	15.6	39	1
Dailey, J.	15	55	3.7	10	0
Ross, C.	9	54	6.0	13	0
Lord, J.	5	46	9.2	31	1
Davis, J.	10	22	2.2	6	1
Horne, D.	6	16	2.7	7	0
Kriewald, S.	2	11	5.5	7	0
Davies, J.	1	0	0.0	0	0
Todd, D.	1	0	0.0	0	0

PASSING

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Dailey, J.	2-4-1	50.0	16	0
Lord, J.	2-3-0	66.7	19	0

RECEIVING

Herian, M.	1	16	16.0	16	0
Ross, C.	1	10	10.0	10	0
LeFlore, M.	1	6	6.0	6	0
Davies, J.	1	3	3.0	3	0

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG	I20
Larson, K.	4	178	44.5	64	0

PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	2	19	9.5	19	0
Williams, D.	1	10	10.0	19	0
Bullocks, J.	1	38	38.0	26	1

KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	1	34	34.0	34	0

DEFENSE

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Ruud, B.	5	5	10	1-3	0	0
Johnson, T.	3	4	7	1-4	0	0
Williams, D.	3	4	7	1-1	0	0
Bingham, R.	1	3	4	1-2	0	1-2
Bullocks, D.	2	1	3	0	0	0
Siegel, S.	1	2	3	0	0	0
Washington, F.	2	0	2	0	0	0
McPherson, L.	2	0	2	0	0	0
Hollowell, T.	1	1	2	1-6	1-10	0
Ricketts, P.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Amos, W.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Shanle, A.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Carriker, A.	0	2	2	0	0	0
Cooper, I.	0	2	2	0	0	0
Buller, C.	0	2	2	0	0	0
Smith, L.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Kabongo, P.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Sievers, C.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Butler, T.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Thorne, F.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Tomasevicz, C.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Bullocks, J.	0	1	1	0	0	0
Huston, K.	0	1	1	0	1-0	0
Adams, T.	0	1	1	0	0	0
Pippens, J.	0	1	1	0	0	0
Helming, J.	0	1	1	0	0	0
LeFlore, M.	0	1	1	0	0	0
Dailey, J.	0	1	1	0	0	0

IOWA STATE

RUSHING

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Flynn, A.	15	26	1.7	13	0
Terry, W.	3	15	5.7	8	0
Hicks, S.	6	16	2.7	5	0
Wagner, M.	6	11	1.8	4	0

PASSING

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Flynn, A.	13-29-1	44.8	109	0
Terry, W.	6-11-1	54.5	57	0
Yelk, T.	1-1-0	100.0	-6	0

RECEIVING LEADERS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Young, L.	6	68	10.1	28	0
Danielsen, L.	4	37	9.3	12	0
Hicks, S.	4	19	4.8	9	0
Wright, J.	2	23	11.5	17	0

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG	I20
Yelk, T.	6	206	34.3	49	1
Team	2	0	0.0	0	0

KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Banks-Bursey, D.	2	32	16.0	23	0

DEFENSE LEADERS

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Woodley, J.	5	2	7	1-1	0	0
Brown, B.	4	3	7	1-9	0	1-9
Billups, J.	4	2	6	0	0	0
Anderson, E.	3	3	6	0	0	0
Berryman, J.	2	3	5	0	1-16	0
Buchanan, J.	2	3	5	0	0	0
Hobbs, E.	2	3	5	0	0	0
Jackson, D.	2	2	4	1-3	0	0
Timmons, M.	1	3	4	0	0	0
TeBrink, T.	2	1	3	0	0	0
Leaders, N.	2	1	3	0	0	0
Smith, J.	2	1	3	0	0	0
Carstens, J.	1	2	3	0	0	0
Curvey, B.	1	2	3	0	0	0
Robertson, M.	1	2	3	0	0	0

2003 SEASON STATS

RUSHING LEADERS

Name	G	Att.	Yds.	YPG	TD
Lord, J.	8	129	606	75.8	9
Davis, J.	8	116	506	63.2	2
Horne, D.	8	97	419	52.4	4
Ross, C.	8	36	139	17.4	1
Dailey, J.	5	32	128	25.6	0
Fluellen, I.	6	8	95	15.8	1
Miller, R.	6	10	65	10.8	1
Davies, J.	8	20	55	6.9	2
Kriewald, S.	8	8	52	6.5	0
LeFlore, M.	8	2	21	2.6	0

PASSING

Name	G	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Lord, J.	8	49-88-4	55.7	669	3
Dailey, J.	5	9-14-2	64.3	11[illegible]	2

RECEIVING

Name	G	No.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Herian, M.	8	15	293	19.5	36.6	1
Pilkington, R.	8	14	210	15.0	26.2	1
LeFlore, M.	8	13	123	9.5	15.4	1
Davis, J.	8	4	21	5.2	2.6	0
Davies, J.	8	4	19	4.8	2.4	0
Fluellen, I.	6	3	85	28.3	14.2	2
Ross, C.	8	1	10	10.0	1.2	0
Kelser, D.	8	1	9	9.0	1.1	0
Kriewald, S.	8	1	6	6.0	0.8	0
Horne, D.	8	1	5	5.0	0.6	0
Liley, T.	8	1	5	5.0	0.6	0

FIELD GOALS

Name	G	Att.	Good	Long
Dyches, D.	7	15	11	[illegible]
DeAngelis, S.	6	3	1	28

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG	I20
Larson, K.	39	1,703	43.7	71	[illegible]6

PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	23	214	9.3	30	0
Ross, C.	4	56	14.0	30	0

KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	11	313	28.5	43	0
O'Holleran, J.	2	27	13.5	21	0

DEFENSIVE LEADERS

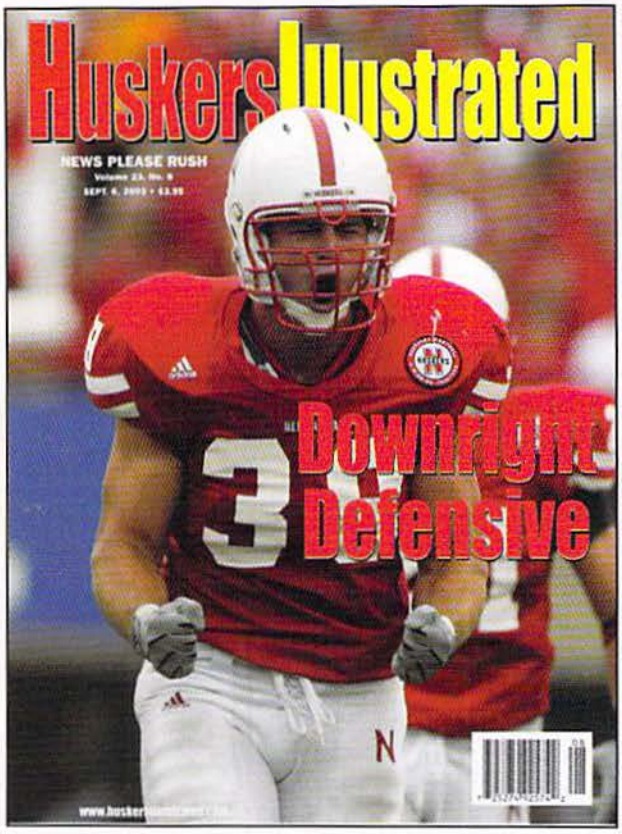
Name	G	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	S/Yds.
Ruud, B.	8	32	46	78	8-33	1-27	2.5-21
Williams, D.	8	47	28	75	10-45	1-2	3.5-40
Hollowell, T.	8	23	24	47	5-24	0	1-10
Johnson, T.	8	20	23	43	7-23	0	2-15
Washington, F.	8	24	14	38	2-3	3-14	0
Bullocks, D.	8	20	14	34	4-5	0	0
Bullocks, J.	8	10	19	29	0	7-93	0
Smith, L.	8	13	14	27	4-12	0	0
Thomas, B.	8	12	15	27	4-20	0	1-7

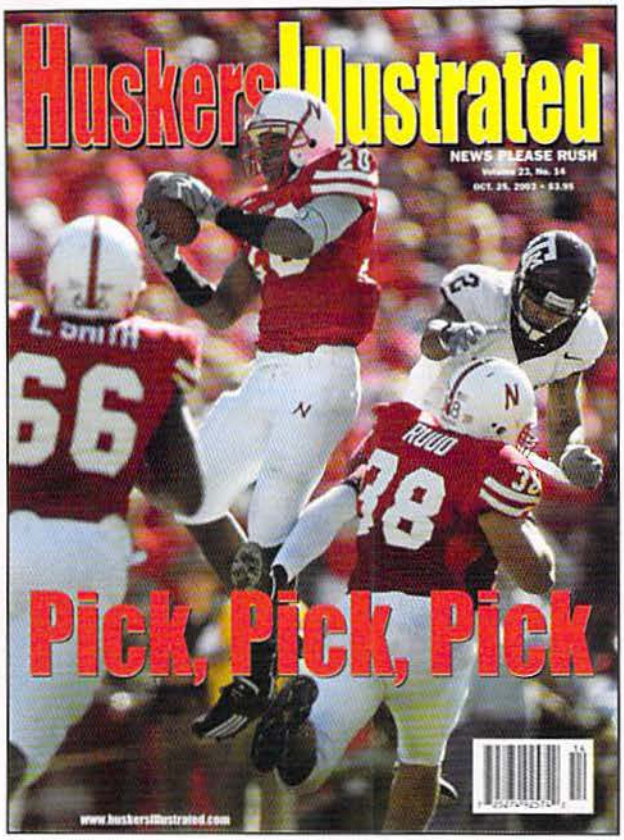
TEAM STATISTICS

	NU	OPP
Total Offensive Yards	2,859	[illegible],019
Plays	573	516
Average Per Play	5.0	3.9
Average Per Game	357.4	252.4
Net Rushing Yards	2,073	780
Attempts	469	258
TDs Rushing	20	6
Net Passing Yards	786	[illegible],239
Completions	58	119
Average Per Pass	7.6	4.8
Average Per Catch	13.6	10.4
Average Per Game	98.2	[illegible]54.9
TDs Passing	5	5
Sacks By-Yards	18-137	9-67
Fumbles-Lost	23-11	[illegible]2-14
Penalties-Yards	61-444	48-355

Scoring	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	OT	TOT
NU	80	32	88	34	0	234
Opponents	24	24	3	40	0	91

All Huskers . . .





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WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Early Interest

Center Lewis was enamored with Huskers at an early age

By Mike Babcock

When Bill Lewis returned for the induction ceremony into the Nebraska Football Hall of Fame earlier this season, his mom told him a story that occurred when he was a third-grader.

His family had brought him to Lincoln to compete in an age-group wrestling tournament, sponsored by the YMCA. As they drove past the capitol, his sister asked what the sower atop the dome was doing. Young Bill responded without hesitation. The sower was throwing a football he said.

"I don't remember that," Lewis says. "But my mom said, 'You were dead serious.' "

Around the same age, he was hunting with his dad and one of his dad's buddies, who asked him what he wanted to do when he got older. He said, "flat out," he wanted to play football at Nebraska.

Again, Lewis doesn't remember. But his dad does.

Lewis doesn't doubt the veracity of those recollections, not only because they are his parents' but also because he does remember being enamored with Nebraska football from an early age.

Nearly 20 years after his Cornhusker career ended with All-America honors and 10 years after an extended professional career that included stints with the Los Angeles Raiders, Arizona Cardinals and New England Patriots, Lewis still has that youthful affection for the Cornhuskers.

He lives in the Phoenix area, where he has his own radio show, focusing on area professional and collegiate sports. "But Nebraska games are the only thing I get emotional about," he says.

Bill Lewis was back in Lincoln for his induction into the Nebraska Football Hall of Fame earlier this season.

The station on which his program, "From the Bleachers," airs from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Friday, KDUS-AM, is part of the Pinnacle Network, which carries the games. And former Cornhusker defensive coordinator Charlie McBride makes guest appearances on his show.

Even though he grew up in Sioux City, Iowa, Lewis remembers watching the Cornhuskers on television, playing Oklahoma on Thanksgiving weekend, in particular. As a result, when Nebraska began recruiting him, the decision about where he would go to school was all but made.

"Nebraska was always one of those places I wanted to go," he says.

Notre Dame came in late, but put him off with its arrogance. And Iowa State called him constantly, "seven or eight times a week," he says. A Cyclone assistant told him if he came to Iowa State, he would be an All-American but if he went to Nebraska,

he would "get lost in the shuffle."

If that were true, he asked the assistant, then what did it say about the quality of the two programs? He wanted to go to a program that could contend for a national championship.

Someone less determined might have gotten lost in the shuffle at Nebraska, of course. His 1981 scholarship recruiting class included 22 other freshmen. But because of the walk-ons, there were well over 100 players on the Cornhuskers' freshman team, coached by Frank Solich.

Lewis was a center, among nine on the overall depth chart. "Everybody wanted to play center at Nebraska," he says. Center for the Cornhuskers was a high-profile position.

Dave Rimington, who was following recent All-American centers Rik Bonness and Tom Davis, would earn the first of back-to-back Outland Trophies when Lewis was a freshman.

Mark Traynowicz, who began as an offensive tackle, succeeded Rimington after the second Outland, starting for two seasons and earning All-American recognition in 1984. Lewis didn't reach the top of the depth chart until he was a senior. But he had prepared well and seized the opportunity.

That was nothing new. He didn't start for the Sioux City East High School team until his senior season because he was behind his brother, John. He earned only one varsity letter, in fact.

Even so, he considered every practice a learning experience. That attitude was re-enforced during five years at Nebraska. And it enabled him to succeed in the NFL, as a seventh-round draft pick.

Only five players selected after the fifth round in the 1986 NFL draft made the grade, says Lewis, and that included those who signed as free agents. Plus, the team that drafted him, the Raiders, wasn't in need of offensive linemen. Yet he earned a job and played four seasons with the Raiders.

His NFL success can be traced to Nebraska, he says. It "had a huge impact on me, no doubt about it. Nebraska was unbelievably well organized. Going through all that really prepared me."

And that was a reflection of Tom Osborne, he says. "He might not know it, but I think a lot of guys appreciate Tom a lot, especially those who went on to the NFL. You just appreciate how Nebraska approached preparation. We were ready to grind it out, and that came directly from him."

Lewis' willingness to prepare, to put in the time and effort, to grind it out, carried over into the post-pro football world. After he finished with the short-lived Memphis team in the Canadian Football League, he went to work for a landscaping firm in the Phoenix area, then went off on his own.

But "you're spoiled in football because you have to bust your butt," he says. He enjoyed the business of landscape design, but not having to deal "with all the crap" that went with it.

Not everyone in the business world has that same commitment and intensity, so when the opportunity came to be involved in radio, after he had begun doing some work on the side, he moved from landscape design to putting together his own show, for which he now handles all aspects.

He developed that ability at Nebraska, where attention to detail and repetition were the keys to success. There were 175 to 180 players at practice, and "nobody ever stood around," he says.

"You got to rep the hell out of plays. That was absolutely essential to Nebraska's success. I don't know if another program in the country had that. There was nothing close in the NFL."

Lewis couldn't have known that when he was in the third grade. But even then, he knew that Nebraska meant football, and Nebraska football meant success. ■

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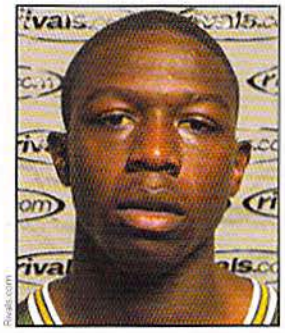
Huskers Court Running Backs

Top Louisiana prospect might play receiver in college

By Doug Horwich



Ja'Kouri Williams of Plaquemine, La., is considering Nebraska.

In an attempt to restock the I-back position in this year's recruiting class, the Nebraska coaching staff is pursuing a substantial number of the nation's top running backs.

While the recruitment of Andre Brown, Darius Walker and Brandon Gunn continues, a number of other prospects are also very much in the picture.

The top running back prospect in the country this year may be Ja'Kouri Williams (5-foot-11, 180 pounds, 4.4 40-yard dash) from Plaquemine High School in Plaquemine, La. Nebraska is recruiting the Southeast very aggressively this year, and Williams is clearly one of their top targets in the region.

However, while the Husker staff certainly views Williams as one of the top running back prospects in the country, Williams himself isn't so sure. In fact, he's having trouble deciding which position to play at the next level, as some schools, including current favorite Tennessee, have expressed an interest in him as a wide receiver. In addition to the Volunteers and Huskers, Williams is also looking at Michigan and Florida State. He has already received more than 10 written scholarship offers.

"Tennessee is still ahead of Nebraska," Williams said. "They like my size, and I'm starting to like the idea of maybe playing wide receiver in college. I haven't talked to them about it, but if I do make a position change in college, Tennessee would give me the best option of doing that and still getting recognition. Nebraska doesn't throw the ball much.

"A lot of colleges like running backs in the 210-220-pound range, and I only weigh 180 pounds. I've gained about 10 pounds since the end of last season, so I don't know how much bigger I will get."

If Nebraska is successful in convincing Williams that he has a future at running back, then the Huskers would have to be considered the front-runner for his signature.

Williams is being recruited by Husker running backs coach Tim Albin, who has maintained frequent contact.

"I talked to Coach Albin throughout the whole summer, and we've got a great relationship," he said. "I called him pretty much every week to talk to him. Me and Coach Albin have developed a relationship, and

NEBRASKA COMMITMENTS FOR 2004

Player	Hometown (school)	Ht.	Wt.	Pos.
Lance Brandenburgh	Overland Park, Kan. (St. Thomas Aquinas)	6-1	215	LB
Andy Christensen	Bennington, Neb.	6-3	275	DT
Allan Evridge	Papillion, Neb. (Papillion-LaVista)	6-1	205	QB
Michael Keenan	Kansas City, Mo. (Oak Park)	6-2	220	LB
Maurice McClellan	Pawcatuck, Conn. (Stonington)	6-3	210	ATH
D.T. McDowell	Tucker, Ga.	6-1	190	QB
Terrence Nunn	Houston, Texas (Cypress Falls)	6-0	185	WR
Seth Olsen	Omaha, Neb. (Millard North)	6-5	300	OL
Ty Steinkuhler	Lincoln, Neb. (Southwest)	6-3	235	DE
Nathan Swift	Hutchinson, Minn.	6-3	190	WR

he's shown way more interest in me than anyone else."

One attractive aspect about Nebraska, as far as Williams is concerned, is the lack of depth at I-back. With starter Josh Davis graduating and backup David Horne being a junior by the time he would arrive in Lincoln, Williams believes that he could contribute immediately.

"It looks like Nebraska did not have that strong of a running back like they used to have," Williams said. "I think I could fit in there and be that type of back. It looks like they have a good line though. I'd like a chance at early playing time. I'd like to go where they don't have too many running backs already. I'd like some competition because I think it makes you better, but I don't want to go where they already have seven running backs."

Williams does not plan to allow distance from home to factor heavily into his decision, despite his mother's preference that he stay closer to home.

"At first I think my mom wanted me to stay close," he said. "But, now she's telling me to go where I'll be happy, no matter where it is."

Interestingly enough, Williams is not the only Louisiana running back who's being courted by the Husker staff. Also in the mix is Derron Thomas (6-0, 185, 4.4) from East St. John High School in Reserve, La. Nebraska only recently began recruiting Thomas, but the Huskers are even with the other schools on his list of favorites.

"Florida State, Michigan, Colorado, Nebraska and LSU are who I'm planning on visiting," Thomas said. "I did have Miami up there, but I replaced them with Florida State. All of the schools are equal with me right now. I don't have a favorite among those five."

Thomas already has a good idea of what he's looking for in making his decision.

"Education is the most important, and it comes first," he said. "After that I want to be around good coaches that I communicate well with, have a chance at early playing time, be on a team that has a chance to play for the national championship, play for a school that has a great tradition and fit in well with the offense that they run. Distance is not a concern for me. I don't mind if it's far away as long as

RECRUITING NOTES

Top Prospects Set Nov. Visits

By Rick Shaw

Nebraska hopes to add to its list of current commitments over the next month as several high profile athletes are scheduled to make their way to Lincoln for official visits.

Some of the Huskers' top prospects are scheduled to be on hand the weekend of Nov. 15 to watch Nebraska take on Kansas State. The preliminary visit list for that weekend includes the following high-profile names:

Cortney Grixby, Cornerback, 5-foot-9, 160 pounds, Omaha (Central), Neb. — The nation's fifth-rated cornerback prospect (by Rivals.com) has attended almost every Nebraska home game this season but has yet to take an official visit to Lincoln. Grixby likes the Huskers, along with Iowa, Notre Dame, and UCLA.

"The Nebraska defensive coaching staff has really brought the excitement back to Lincoln," Grixby said. "The Blackshirts are back. I have a lot of faith in what they're doing down there."

Chris Bowers, Defensive End, 6-3, 240, Shreveport (Evangel), La. — This defensive end from the Bayou State has a knack for getting to the quarterback. An All-State selection in 2002, Bowers tallied 25 sacks as a sophomore and 18 as a junior. Through four games this season, Bowers already had amassed seven sacks. Ole Miss, Texas Tech, and LSU, along with the Huskers, are the main contenders for Bowers' commitment.

Grayson Gunheim, Defensive End, 6-6, 240, Sebastopol (Analy), Calif. — Another top defensive end prospect, Gunheim may be the fastest defensive end prospect in the country. With a 4.49-second 40-yard dash to his credit and a 36-inch vertical leap, Gunheim can match up with any athlete in the country in regard to raw ability. He'll take his first official visit of the recruiting process to Lincoln. The Huskers currently hold the edge for Gunheim's commitment, with USC, Washington, Oregon, Arizona State, and Colorado giving chase.

— The battle for the signature of Omaha (Central) running back Brandon Gunn looks like it could come down to two Big 12 North Division rivals. The 5-11, 190-pound speedster took his first official visit of the recruiting process to Manhattan, Kan., on Oct. 18 to watch Kansas State take on Colorado. He gave the visit a favorable review.

"My visit went pretty good," Gunn said. "It was fun. Darren Sproles was my host down there, and he introduced me to the other players and showed me Manhattan. It was a good time."

Gunn, who has also attended a couple of Nebraska home games this fall (unofficially), said the atmosphere of Kansas State football is comparable with what he's witnessed in Lincoln on game day.

"The main thing about both of them is that they both have good fans," Gunn said. "In Nebraska, you find those die-hard Husker fans, and I saw a lot of die-hard Kansas State fans in Kansas. They both love their football teams."

Gunn is in no hurry to make his college decision, and plans to take a few official visits during the month of December. UCLA, Colorado, Iowa and Nebraska are all under consideration for visits. ■

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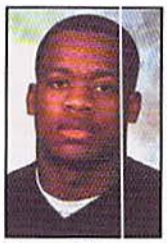
it's a good fit."

Thomas definitely has an interest in Nebraska and is also being recruited by Albin.


Derron Thomas

"I got to talk to Coach Solich, and he's a good guy," he said. "They say that they'd like to see me come up there, so they're definitely a school I'm looking at hard. They run a different offense than we do here. We run from the spread formation with three or four wideouts, so it's different, but I do like the fact that they run the ball a lot."

Another top national prospect who has shown interest in Nebraska is Tony Temple (5-10, 190, 4.4) from Rockhurst High School in Kansas City, Mo.

Temple has more than 40 scholarship offers but is focusing primarily on Midwestern programs. His current list of favorites includes Nebraska, Kansas State, Missouri, Oklahoma, Notre Dame, Michigan and Iowa. Pac-Ten power Southern California has also shown interest in Temple but has yet to extend a written offer.

Temple is a big college football fan and has spent hours each Saturday checking out his favorite programs.

"That's all I do on Saturdays," he said. "I'm watching all the ones that are recruiting me. It's so hard to keep up with everybody. When I'm watching, I look for what kind of offense they run, their substitution patterns, and even their defense. I'm paying attention to everything."

Unfortunately for the Huskers, Lincoln's proximity to Kansas City likely means that Temple will opt to take an unofficial visit and save his officials for programs that are farther from home.

"I'm going to take unofficial visits to all of the schools close around here like Nebraska, Oklahoma and Missouri," he said. "I have not set any up yet, but when they play somebody good, I'll be there."

Temple definitely is interested in Nebraska and likes the Huskers' style of offense. "I like the way they run the option," he said. "It's a program that's coming up and right now I feel like I could play there and get playing time." ■

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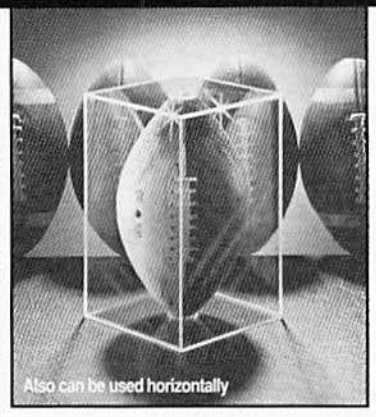

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Uncharted

Back-to-back Big 12 losses at home leave young Huskers seeking answers

By Todd Henrichs

Nebraska's faithful volleyball fans have grown accustomed to a lot of things in years of filing into the Coliseum.

Conference titles. All-American setters.

Sold-out crowds. And the band.

Everything but Big Red losses.

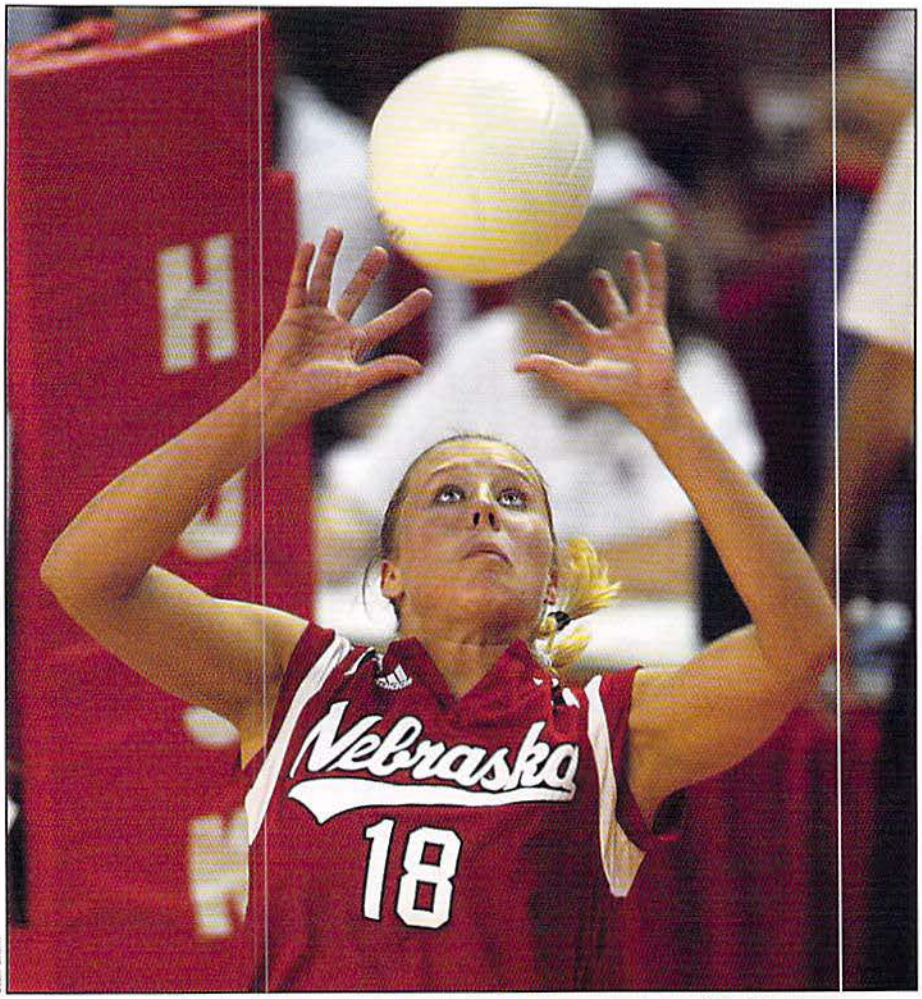
So when Nebraska lost to Georgia Tech in the non-conference season, the faithful followers shook their heads just a bit before reminding themselves that this was a young group of Huskers adjusting to two new setters, a new system and facing a quality team.

Surely Nebraska, which hadn't lost to a conference opponent in more than three years, was still the dominant team in its league, and by the end of the season, there'd be another banner to hang from the rafters of one of the most-feared home venues in collegiate sports.

Times change.

In five days of Big 12 Conference play, Nebraska's fans saw something that had never been seen in Coliseum history. For the first time, the Huskers suffered back-to-back home losses to conference teams.

First, Kansas State shocked the Huskers, holding on to win in five games after taking a two-games-to-none lead. That ended a 78-match winning streak over conference teams, the fourth-longest in NCAA history.



Scott Bruhn

Nebraska has used a two-setter system that features true freshman Dani Busboom (above) and sophomore Michelle Lynch (right).

Nebraska had a streak of a far different sort after a Missouri team that hadn't beaten Nebraska since 1982 rallied from two games down to win in Lincoln. In both cases, Nebraska wasn't as much beaten by a better team as beaten down by its own mistakes.

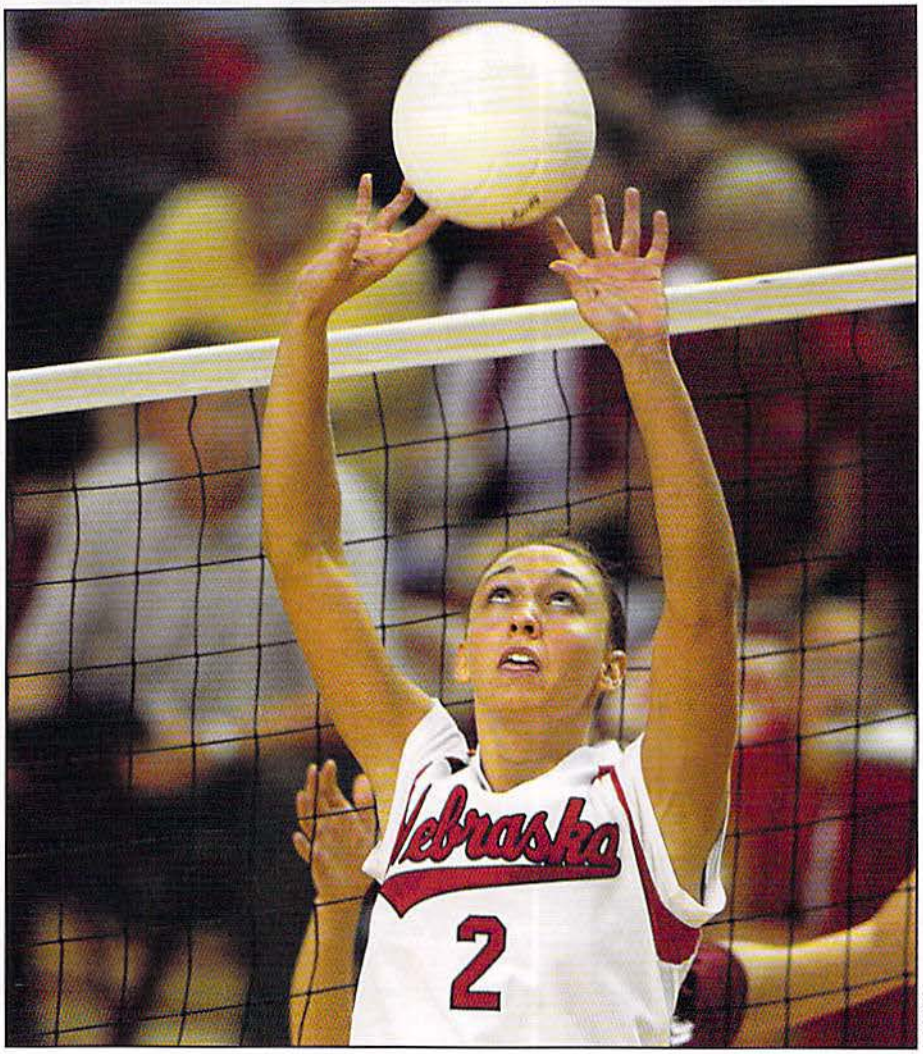
The Huskers committed 41 hitting errors against Kansas State, and with head coach John Cook threatening lineup changes, followed that up with 44 hitting errors against Missouri.

"We can take losing, but losing the way we lost is unacceptable," Cook said. "I think that's the hardest thing for everybody to live with."

With three All-Americans gone from last year's team, Cook knew he'd have to live with some ups and downs this season. But even he admits some of what has happened this season has caught the coaching staff off guard.

The Huskers have struggled to find their rhythm offensively utilizing a two-setter system that features sophomore Michelle Lynch and true

l Territory



Scott Bruhn

freshman Dani Busboom. As a result, Nebraska's consistency has wavered and its hitting efficiency has struggled to approach the usual NU levels.

There's no one aspect to blame, the Huskers say.

"It's a commitment by everybody to get better at whatever it is that's going to turn it around," senior Anna Schrad said. "Our passing has to be more consistent so our setters can be more consistent, which will make our attackers more consistent. As long as each one of us individually focuses on doing those things well, then we'll improve."

The two-setter system was designed to make Nebraska a bigger threat offensively and create better opportunities for Nebraska's attackers. Yet when such success didn't show up in the numbers, Cook publicly discussed pulling the plug on the scheme and going back to a one-setter system used by most teams.

The drawback to two setters, as Cook sees it, is that when two or three players struggle, it more significantly impacts the entire team. The advantage remains unchanged from what Cook saw in the off-season: The system gets more players involved.

"We're so balanced, we don't need somebody to have a career night," Cook said. "But with this system, we're able to have a very balanced team and not have to rely on somebody having a great match. When the right match-up happens, then somebody has a chance for a big night."

Sophomore Melissa Elmer has had several big nights, including a 16-kill, 15-block effort at Kansas. Schrad had back-to-back 20-kill performances against Georgia Tech and Texas A&M. Jennifer Saleaumua had 19 kills against the Jayhawks.

But after the back-to-back losses set up a down-to-the-wire conference title race among several teams, all anyone associated with the Huskers could talk about were the hitting errors.

"Volleyball is a lot mental, more mental than physical," Lynch said. "You can have all the physical attributes of a great athlete and still not get the job done if you're not playing with your head. It all comes down to smart shots.

"In a tie game, are you going to wheel it out of bounds or are you going to find a shot, find a kill for your team?"

It this new era, one where Nebraska loses Big 12 matches and opposing teams walk into the Coliseum without the usual trepidation, fans have to be ready for a wild ride. Nebraska can avenge its losses and still win the conference title in November, but it's going to take a strong effort from a still-maturing team.

"We've just been so dominant the last couple years, we haven't felt how competitive it really is," Cook said. "The Big 12 is a year older than it was last year, and Nebraska is several years younger. We're not using that as an excuse, but maybe our inexperience hurts us a little bit." ■

CROSSWORD

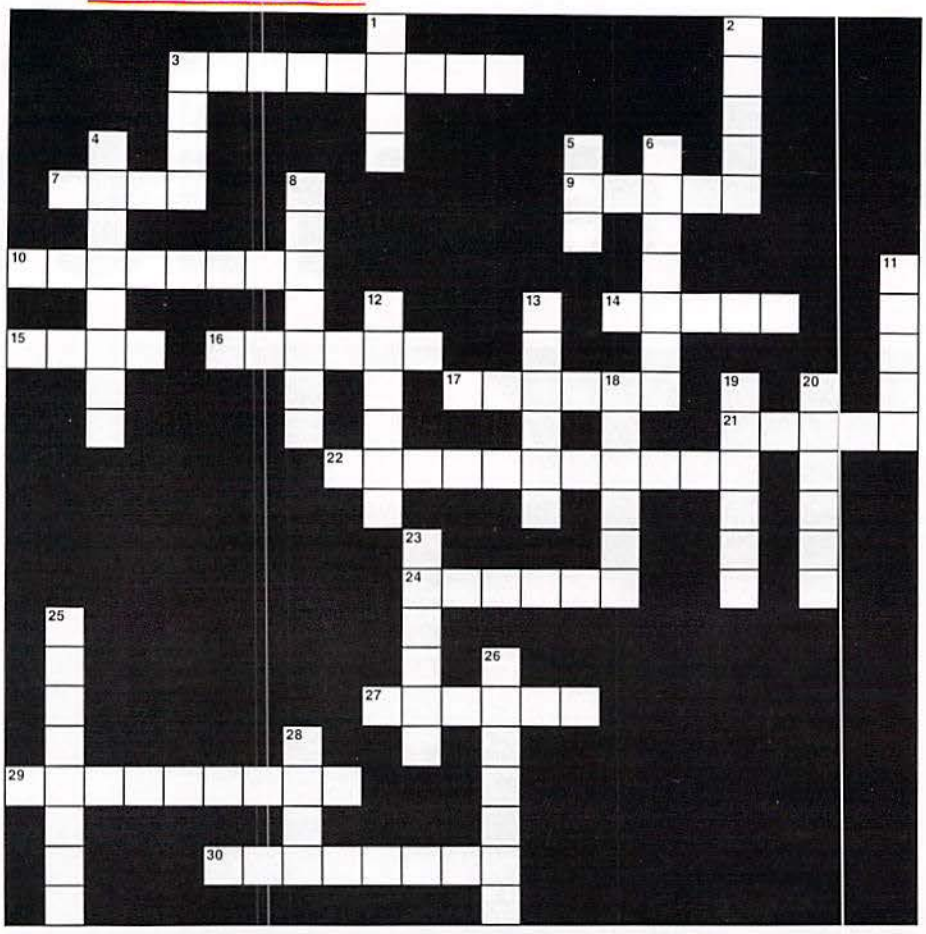
ACROSS

3 Texas nickname
7 NU linebacker who scored vs. Texas A&M
9 Texas head coach
10 NU's leader in sacks
14 Number of turnovers by Texas A&M vs. NU
15 Handled kickoffs for NU vs. Texas A&M
16 NU's No. 11 (offense)
17 NU's No. 5 (defense)
21 NU defensive linemen who scored vs. Texas A&M
22 Tom Osborne's current job
24 Texas campus location
27 NU's JUCO transfer offensive lineman
29 Memorial Stadium playing surface
30 Caught TD pass vs. Texas A&M

DOWN

1 NU's indoor practice pavilion
2 NU's passing game coordinator
3 NU's No. 5 (offense)
4 NU's leader in interceptions
5 Network for NU-Texas game
6 NU linebacker sidelined by injury
8 1997 Lombardi Award winner
11 T.J. Hollowell's home state
12 1997 Outland Trophy winner
13 NU's No. 11 (defense)
18 NU true freshman offensive lineman
19 NU's Nov. 8 opponent
20 NU's special teams coordinator
23 Threw TD pass vs. Texas A&M
25 NU's head coach in 1961
26 NU's recruiting coordinator
28 Ex-Husker center now with Raiders

Answers in Nov. 8 issue



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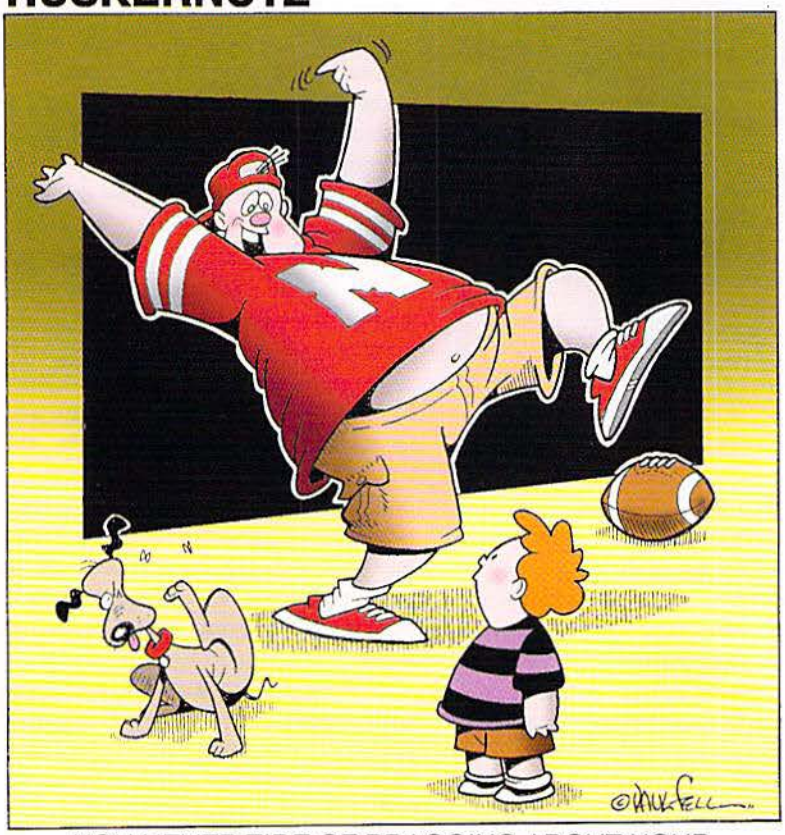

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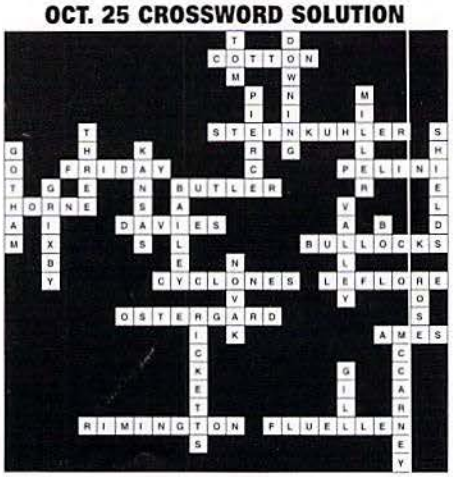

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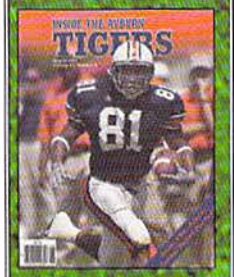

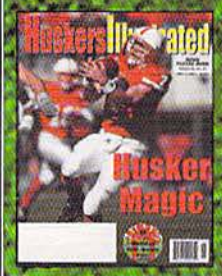

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Looking For Respect

Cornhuskers could regain their swagger by winning when few expect them to

Mike BABCOCK

RESPECT IS ONE THING. Awe is another. Le Kevin Smith respects the football tradition at Texas. But he's not in awe of the Longhorns, nor will he be when Nebraska visits Austin on Saturday.

Like most of his teammates, Smith has never been there. So he's looking forward to the trip. Some things are bound to impress him, he said after Nebraska's 28-0 victory against Iowa State.

However, "you're not going to find anybody in awe," he said. "I'm looking forward to going down there and smashing on them. You're going to hear somebody say, 'This is our house now.' "

If the Cornhuskers can turn Texas Memorial Stadium into their "house" for a day, the way Oklahoma took over Memorial Stadium in Lincoln during the mid-1980s, they can position themselves for a trip to the Big 12 championship game at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City, Mo., on Dec. 6.

Every game from here on out is crucial to that end. The scramble in the Big 12 North is such that Nebraska could lose at Texas and still earn a trip to Kansas City, of course. But a victory against the Longhorns would help retrieve something that was left in Colorado two seasons ago.

Sophomore Le Kevin Smith is looking forward to the Texas trip.

The Cornhuskers could regain their swagger by winning when few expect them to.

Despite a 7-1 record, there are doubters, a fact reflected in their drop from No. 10 to No. 18 in the Associated Press poll following the 41-24 loss at Missouri three weeks ago.

Going into the Iowa State game, the Cornhuskers were No. 14 in the AP poll, with Oklahoma State, Bowling Green and Utah the only major one-loss teams ranked below them.

Though Texas is ranked below them, the under-achieving Longhorns represent a significant challenge, which has as much to do with perception as the reality of a 6-2 record. A victory at Texas would give Nebraska credibility, and the mindset to beat Kansas State in Lincoln two weeks later.

Kansas State blocks the doorway to the Big 12 championship game. But the Cornhuskers can't afford to look ahead, and they haven't to this point in the season, according to Smith.

Nebraska has taken this season "team by team," he said, and that attitude has come from within each player.

The coaches haven't had to remind anybody — though as coaches they have.

The players haven't allowed themselves to look beyond the next game because of "what we've been through, what we went through last year," said Smith, a sophomore defensive tackle.

And every game "we have stepped up," he said, "except Missouri."

Why? "I don't have an answer," he said. "But that one loss let us realize what it takes."

What it takes is preparation, proper focus on the practice field.

"The game is won before game day," Smith said.

In some ways, the Iowa State game was the calm before the storm. After Texas, Nebraska plays at Kansas, gets Kansas State at home and then travels to Colorado to finish the regular season.

Before the opener against Oklahoma State, most Cornhusker fans would have been happy to think Nebraska would take a 7-1 record to Austin, on the way to finishing 8-4 or 9-3.

But the bar has been raised, and expectations have changed accordingly. An 8-4 finish following a 7-1 start doesn't have the appeal it did in early August, when the team began practice.

If the players were inclined to look ahead, Iowa State would have provided that opportunity. Injuries, youth and five consecutive losses hardly added up to the Cyclones' being formidable foes. But no one mentioned Texas prior to the Iowa State game, Smith said. He was adamant about that.

Coach Frank Solich was asked if the victory represented a good lead-in to Texas week.

"It depends on how you look at it," he replied. "It is a win, which is the kind of send-off you would like to have." But, he added, you also would like to have played four solid quarters.

"We haven't really talked about it (the Texas game)," redshirted freshman wide receiver Isaiah Fluellen said. "We go game-by-game. We'll talk about Texas now and get ready for them."

Sophomore free safety Josh Bullocks and junior middle linebacker Barrett Ruud said they had never been to Austin and were looking forward to it. "It's going to be a fun game," said Ruud.

"This is where the fun starts, when you go on the road," senior quarterback Jammal Lord said. "When you're on the road, it's like the whole world is against you, and to win is a great feeling."

The Cornhuskers expect to win in Austin, according to Smith. They won't be in awe. ■

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